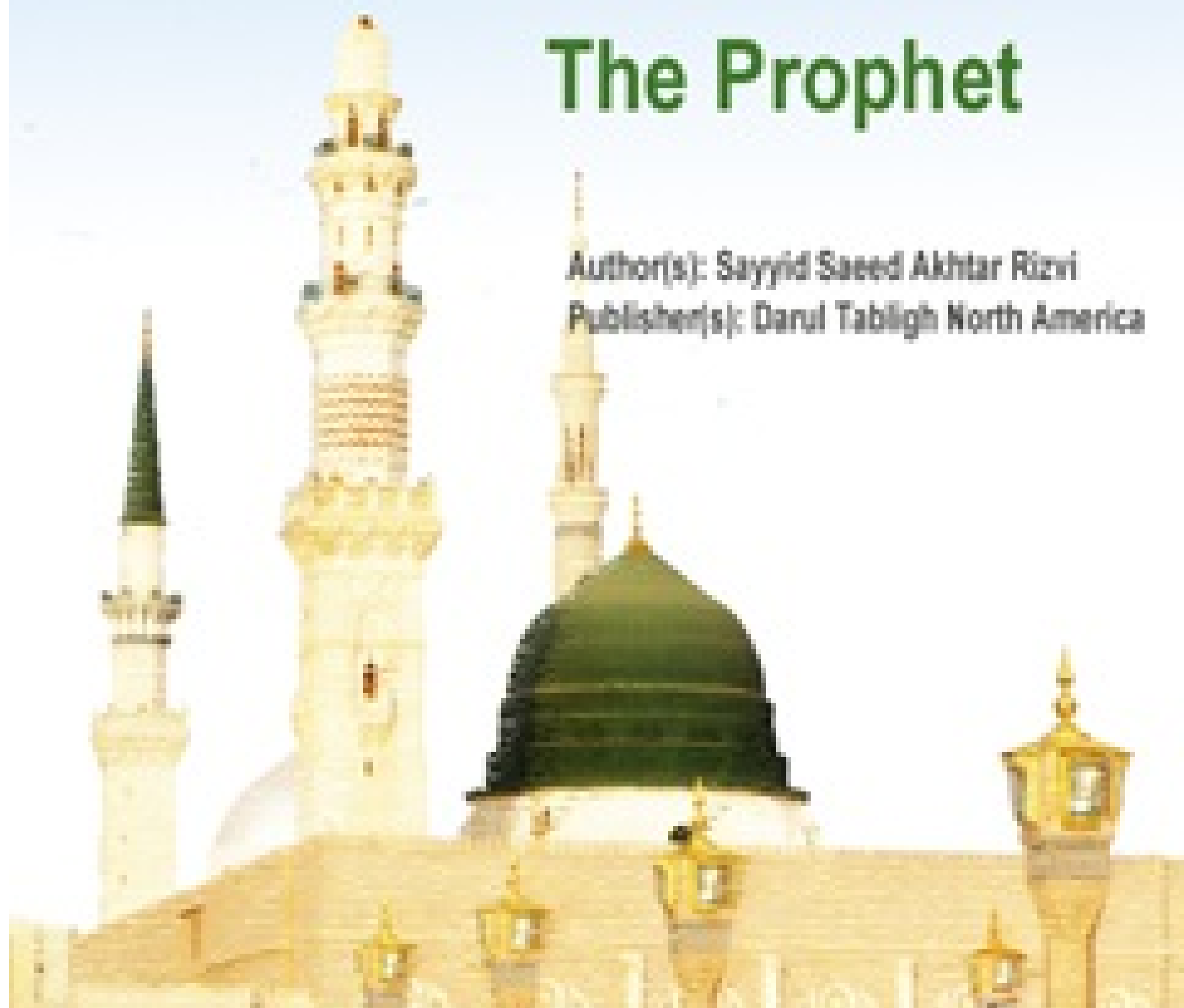
The Life of Muhammad

The Prophet

Author(s): Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi
Publisher(s): Darul Tabligh North America



بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

The Life of Muhammad The Prophet

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:Published in print

Darul Tabligh North America

:Digital Publisher

Ghaemiyeh center of computerized researches

Contents

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BOOK ID

Author(s): Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi

Publisher(s): Darul Tabligh North America

Category: Prophet Muhammad

Topic Tags: Prophethood Makkah Qur ٠٣٩;an Divine Revelation

Person Tags: Prophet Muhammad

point

Detailed account of the life and history of Prophet Muhammad (s), including his birth and early life, events in Makkah and Madina, and his final years.

Acknowledgement

This publication is made possible through the generous

Support of the Jaffer Family Foundation Trust of New

York, for the sale sawaab of Marhum Gulamhussein

Rajabali Jaffer and Marhuma Rukiabai G.R Jaffer

Readers are requested to recite Sura e Fatiha for all the

Marhumin of the family.

Preface

This book was first published in ١٩٧١ as part of the Islamic Correspondence Course run by Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania.

The idea behind writing this book was to satisfy the needs of our new generation - the youths and the students who are unable to study the scholastic books written by the Muslim scholars and whose only source of information seems to be the biased .writings of orientalists presented as "objective" and "authentic" studies

The book became very popular. It was at once translated into Swahili and was serialized in Islamic Affairs newsletter of Atlanta, Georgia (U.S.A). Since then, it has been reprinted several times in Dar-es-Salaam and Mombasa. Then I revised and expanded it in ۱۹۹۲. Now Al-Haj Mulla Asgharali M.M. Jaffer (President, World Federation of K. S. I. Muslim Communities) has kindly offered to publish it under his .supervision. It is hoped that this edition will prove even more popular and useful

I

must acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr Athar Hussain (ex Secretary to the Govt. of U.P., India) and the late Nawwab Ahmad Husain Khan of Paryanwan (U.P, India) as well as to late 'Allamah Sayyid 'Ali Haydar Naqavi and late 'Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husain Tabataba'i whose books, Prophet Muhammad and His Mission, Tarikh-e-Ahmadi, Tarikh-e-A'immah and Tafsir Al-Mizan, respectively, have provided the main structure of this book. May Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'aIa increase their .rewards

Sayyid Sa’eed Akhtar Rizvi

Dar-es-Salaam

August ١٠, ١٩٩٩

Creation

The "Noor" (Light) is created

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

When Allah intended to create the creatures, He first created the "Noor" (Light) of Muhammad. Al-Qastalani (in Al Mawahibu'l-Ladunniyah, vol. ١, pp. ٥, ٩, ١٠) has quoted the Prophet's traditions to this effect as transmitted through Jabir ibn 'Abdullah al-Ansari and 'Ali (a.s.). The well-known historian al-Mas'udi (in his Maruju 'dh-dhahab) quotes a lengthy tradition from 'Ali (a.s.) to the effect that when Allah created, first of all, the Light of Muhammad, He said to it: "You are My chosen one and the Trustee of .My Light and Guidance

It is because of you that I am going to create the earth and the skies, lay down reward and punishment, and bring into being the Garden and the Fire." Then the

tradition goes on to speak about the Family of the Prophet, about creation of the angels, of the souls, of the world, of the covenant taken from the souls which combined the belief in the One God with acceptance

.of Muhammad's Prophethood

This is why Ibn 'Abbas narrates saying that the Prophet said: "I was Prophet when Adam was between soul and body (i.e. when Adam's creation was in its preliminary .(stages)" (at-Tabarani, Al-Mu'jjam al-Kabir; Al Khasa'is al-Kubra, vol.١, p.۴

Muhammad's Light adorned the 'Arsh (Throne) of God. When eons later, Adam was created, that Light was put in his forehead. It continued its journey, generation after generation, through numerous prophets and their successors till it came to Prophet .(.Ibrahim (a.s.). From Ibrahim (a.s.), it came to his eldest son, Prophet Isma'il (a.s

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) said: "Verily Allah chose Isma'il from the progeny of Ibrahim, and chose Banu Kinanah from the progeny of Isma'il, and chose Quraish from the Banu Kinanah, and chose Banu Hashim from Quraish, and chose me from Banu Hashim." At-Tirmidhi has narrated this tradition from Wathilah ibn al-Asqa' and .(has said that this tradition is sahih (correct

Abul-Fida quotes in his Tarikh (History) a tradition wherein the Prophet (s.a.w.w.) says: "Gabriel said to me: 'I looked at the earth from the east to the west, but I did not find anyone superior to Muhammad, and I looked at the Earth from the east to the west ".but did not find any progeny superior to the progeny of Hashim

(.The Children of Isma'il (a.s

Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.) had brought his eldest son Isma'il (a.s.) with his mother Hajirah (Hagar, in Hebrew) from Kan'an to a barren valley which was later known as Mecca.

He used to visit them once a year. When Isma'il

was old enough to help him, Prophet Ibrahim built the House of Allah known as the .Ka'bah

There was no water in the land when Isma'il and Hajirah were left there. The well of Zamzam miraculously appeared for Isma'il. The tribe of Jurhum, finding the well, sought the permission of Hajirah to settle there. During the annual visit of Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.), permission was given to them, and ultimately Isma'il married in the .(same tribe. He begot twelve sons; the eldest was called Qidar (Cedar, in Hebrew

The Isma'ilites increased in number, thus fulfilling the promise of Allah to Ibrahim to (multiply Isma'il exceedingly. (See Genesis ٢١:١٣

The Isma'ilites, by and by, spread all over Hijaz. They were not organized and consequently had no power. About ٢٠٠ years before Christ, 'Adnan from the children of Qidar arose to some fame. The genealogy of 'Adnan up to Qidar is not agreed upon. The Arabs have narrated various genealogies. The Prophet (s.a.w.w.), in order to emphasize the Islamic ideology that personal qualities, rather than genealogy, was the criterion of excellence, and with a view not to entangle himself in such :unnecessary and useless arguments, ordered the Muslims thus

".When my genealogy reaches 'Adnan, stop"

In the third century of the Christian Era (CE), there arose a leader named Fahr in that family. He was son of Malik, son of Nadhar, son of Kinanah, son of Khuzaymah, son of .Mudrikah, son of Ilyas, son of Madhar, son of Nazar, son of Ma'ad, son of 'Adnan

Some people think that

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this Fahr was called Quraish, and that is why his children came to be known as the .Quraish

In the ۵th generation after Fahr, in the fifth century of the Christian era, a very powerful personality appeared on the scene. He was Qusayi, son of Kilab, son of .Murrah, son of Lu'i, son of Ghalib, son of Fahr

Many people say that it was not Fahr but Qusayi who was called Quraish. The famous Muslim scholar, Shibli al-Nu'mani, writes: "Qusayi became so famous and achieved such a high prestige that some people say that he was the first man to be called Quraish, as Ibn Abdi Rabbih has written in his book Al-'Iqdu'۱-Farid, clearly saying that as Qusayi gathered all the children of Isma'il from far and wide and made them leave the nomadic way of life, settling them around the Ka'bah, he was called Quraish (The Gatherer). Al-Tabari quotes caliph 'Abdul-Malik ibn Marwan as saying that "Qusayi ".was Quraish, and that nobody was given this name before him

When Qusayi came of age, a man from the tribe of Khuza'ah named Hulail was the trustee of the Ka'bah. Qusayi married his daughter and, according to Hulail's will, got :the trusteeship of the Ka'bah after Hulail. Qusayi established many new institutions

- He established Dar-un-Nadwah (Assembly House). It was there that discussions were held to settle important matters like war and peace, caravans assembled before .going out, and marriages and other ceremonies were conducted
- He established the system of Siqayah (making arrangements to

supply water to the pilgrims during the hajj days) and Rifadah (to feed them during those days).

- It appears from al-Tabari that this system was followed in Islam up to his time, i.e. ٥٠٠ years after Qusayi.
- He made arrangements for the pilgrims to stay at Mash'arul-Haram at night and illuminated the valley with lamps, thus making their stay comfortable.
- He rebuilt the Ka'bah and dug the first well at Mecca. Zamzam was filled up long ago and nobody knew of its actual location.

Arab historians unanimously say that he was generous, brave, and sympathetic; his ideas were pure, his thinking clean, and his manners very refined. His word was followed like a religion during his lifetime and even after his death. People used to visit his grave at Hajun (present day Jannatul Ma'alla). No wonder that he was the undisputed chief of the tribe, which owed its strength and power to his leadership. To him had converged all the responsibilities and privileges of the tribe:

- The trustee of the Ka'bah (Hijabah),
- Chairman of Dar-un-Nadwah which he himself had established;
- He fed the pilgrims (Rifadah);
- He arranged to provide them with drinking water (Siqayah); The standard-bearer of Quraish in wartime (Liwa), and
- The commander of the army (Qiyadah).

These were the six privileges, which were looked upon with great respect and before

which all of Arabia bowed down. The most wonderful aspect of his life is his selflessness. In all the accounts of

his life, there never appears any hint that by being the undisputed leader of the tribe, .he had gained anything for his own self

Qusayi had five sons and a daughter: 'Abduddar was the eldest, then Mughirah (known as 'Abd Munaf). Qusayi loved his eldest son very much, and at the time of his .death, he entrusted 'Abduddar with all the six responsibilities mentioned above

But 'Abduddar was not a very able man, whereas 'Abd Munaf was acknowledged as a wise leader even during the life of his father, and his words were dutifully obeyed by the whole tribe. Because of his nobility and benevolence, he was commonly known as "generous." Thus, it came to pass that 'Abduddar shared all his responsibilities with .'Abd Munaf. And 'Abd Munaf virtually became the paramount chief of the Quraish

Abd Munaf had six sons: Hashim, Muttalib, 'Abdush-Shams, and Nawfil were the most' .famous among them

There was no trouble while 'Abduddar and 'Abd Munaf were alive. After their death, a dispute started between their children concerning the distribution of the six responsibilities. A war had almost started before it was agreed upon that Siqayah, Rifadah, and Qiyadah should go to the children of 'Abdu Munaf, and Liwa' and Hijabah should remain with the children of 'Abduddar, while the chairmanship of Dar-un-.Nadwah should be shared by both families

Hashim

Hashim's name will always shine in the history of Arabia and Islam, not only because

he was the great grandfather of the Holy Prophet, but in his own right because

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.of his tremendous achievements

He may well be compared with any great leader of his time. He was the most generous, the most prestigious, and the most respected leader of the Quraish. He used to feed the pilgrims during hajj with royal open-handedness. But the best testimonial to his benevolence is his title "Hashim" whereby he came to be known. Once, there was a great famine in Mecca. Hashim could not look silently at the sorry .plight of the Meccans

He took all his wealth, went to Syria, purchased flour and dried bread, brought it to Mecca and daily slaughtered his camels for gravy; the bread and the biscuits were broken into the gravy and the whole tribe was invited to partake of it. This continued till the famine was averted and all the lives were saved. It was this extraordinary feat that earned him the name "Hashim," the one who breaks (the bread). Hashim's real .name was 'Amr

Hashim was the founder of the trade caravans of the Quraish. He obtained an edict from the Byzantine emperor, which exempted Quraish from all kinds of duties or taxes when entering or leaving the countries under his domain. He obtained the same concession from the emperor of Ethiopia. Thus, the Quraishites started taking their trade caravans in winter to Yemen (which was under the Ethiopian rule) and in the .(summer to Syria and beyond up to Ankara (under Byzantine rule

But the trade routes were not safe; therefore, Hashim visited all the dominant

tribes between Yemen and Ankara and entered into agreements with all of them. They agreed that they would not attack the trade caravans of Quraish, and Hashim undertook on behalf of Quraish that their trade caravans would bring all their necessities to their places of abode and would buy and sell at reasonable prices. Thus, in spite of all the looting and plundering that prevailed in Arabia then, the jade .caravans of Quraish were always safe

It is to this achievement of Hashim that Allah refers in the Qur'an, counting it as a :great bounty of God upon Quraish

For the security and safeguard enjoyed by the Quraish, their safety during (their) journeys by winter and by summer, let them worship the Lord of this House no provides them with food against hunger, and with security against fear. (Qur'an, Ch. (۱۰۶

There was a pathetically pessimistic tradition in Quraish known as Ihtifad. When a poor family could not feed itself, it would go out to the desert and, entering a tent, remain there till death claimed all of its members one by one. They thought that nobody would know of their plight and, by thus starving to death, they would protect .their honor

It was Hashim who persuaded Quraish to actively combat the poverty instead of succumbing to it. His scheme: He joined one rich person with a poor one, provided that their dependents were equal in number. That poor person was to help the rich one during the trade journey. Whatever increase

of capital accrued by way of profit would be shared equally by both. Thus, there would .be no need for Ihtifad

This scheme was wholeheartedly accepted and put in effect by the tribe. This wise suggestion not only removed poverty from the Quraish but also created a feeling of .brotherhood and unity among them

These achievements were enough to justify a very long life. But our wonder knows no bounds when we learn that Hashim. was only ۲۵ years old when death overtook him at Gaza, Palestine, in approximately ۴۸۸ A.D. His grave is preserved, and Gaza is also .called "Ghazzah Hashim," i.e. Hashim's Gaza

Hashim was very handsome, and because of his looks and prestige, many chiefs and even rulers wanted him to marry their daughters. But he married Salma daughter of 'Amr (from the tribe of 'Adi Bani Najjar) of Yathrib. She was the mother of Shaibatul-Hamd (commonly known as 'Abdul-Muttalib) who was in his infancy when Hashim .died

Abdul-Muttalib'

Hashim had five sons: 'Abdul-Muttalib, Asad, Nadhlah, Saifi and Abu Saifi. But the last three had no children; Asad had only a daughter, Fatima bint Asad, mother of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. Thus, it was only through 'Abdul-Muttalib that the progeny of Hashim .survived

Abdul-Muttalib was born at Yathrib (later named Medina) in his maternal'

grandfather's house, and he was only a few months old when Hashim died. After Hashim, his brother Muttalib succeeded him in all the privileges mentioned earlier. After some time, Muttalib went to Yathrib and brought his nephew to

Mecca. When Muttalib entered Mecca with his nephew behind him on his camel, some people said: "This is the slave of Muttalib!" Muttalib said: "No! He is my nephew and son of my deceased brother Hashim." But the name stuck, though today few people .know that the real name of 'Abdul-Muttalib was Shaibatul-Hamd

Muttalib loved 'Abdul-Muttalib and looked after him very well. But 'Abdush-Shams and Nawfil were hostile towards him. At the death of Muttalib, 'Abdul-Muttalib succeeded .him in the two privileges held by him, i.e. Siqayah and Rifadah

In spite of the enmity of his own uncles, his personal virtues and qualities of leadership earned him in later days the title of "Sayyidul Batha" (the Chief of Mecca). He lived to the ripe age of ٨٢. A carpet was spread for him before the Ka'bah and nobody dared to put his foot on it. In later days, this rule was broken only by the orphaned son of 'Abdullah (i.e. the Holy Prophet) who used to sit there and 'Abdul-Muttalib forbade Quraish from interfering with the child because, he told them, "This ".child of mine is to have a special dignity

It was 'Abdul-Muttalib who had forbidden his children from using intoxicants. It was he who used to enter the cave of Hira during the month of Ramadan to spend the month in remembrance of Allah and in feeding the poor. Like his father and uncle, he used to feed and provide water for the pilgrims during the hajj season. During whole ,year

even the beasts and birds were fed from his house and, accordingly, he was called .("Mut'imut-tayr" (feeder of the birds

Some of the systems originated by 'Abdul-Muttalib were later adopted in Islam. He was the first person to make Nadhr and fulfill it, to give one fifth (khums) of the treasure in the way of Allah, to forbid prohibited degrees, to cut a thief s hand, to make intoxicants unlawful, to forbid fornication and adultery, to discourage the system of killing the daughters, to discourage the tawaf around the Ka'bah without clothes, and to fix the compensation of manslaughter (killing someone by mistake or .unintentionally) at ۱۰۰ camels. Islam adopted all these systems

It is not possible to give the whole history of 'Abdul-Muttalib in this short chapter, but two important events must be mentioned: the recovery of Zamzam and the .attempted attack on the Ka'bah by Abraha, the governor of Ethiopia over Yemen

Hundreds of years ago, Zamzam was filled up and nobody knew where it was. (It is not the place here to give the details as to how and by whom it was filled up). One day, 'Abdul-Muttalib was sleeping in Hatim of the Ka'bah. Someone told him in a dream to dig the Taybah and get water. He asked where Taybah was, but the vision vanished without any reply. The same vision was repeated the second and the third day, but .the names were changed every time

On the fourth day, he was told to dig Zamzam. 'Abdul-Muttalib

asked where Zamzam was. He was told the signs. 'Abdul-Muttalib, with his eldest (and at that time the only) son, Harith, dug the place where Zamzam is today. On the fourth day, the wall of the well appeared, and after some more digging, the water-level was .reached

At this success, 'Abdul-Muttalib cried "Allahu Akbar!" and said: "This is the well of Isma'il!" Quraishites gathered around him and started arguing that since the original well was the property of Isma'il, the recovered well, too, belonged to the whole tribe. 'Abdul-Muttalib rejected their claim, saying that it was given especially to him by Allah. .The Quraishites wanted to fight and fill up the well then dig it up again

At last, they agreed to put their case before the wise woman of the tribe of Sa'd in Syria. Every clan sent one man as its representative. 'Abdul-Muttalib, with his son and a few companions, were in the same caravan. But he had his separate arrangements. In the middle of a desert, the water which 'Abdul-Muttalib had was finished. The whole group was suffering from acute thirst. The leaders of the other party refused to give them any water. They were near their death. 'Abdul-Muttalib advised his group to dig some graves, so that when anybody died, others would bury him. Thus only one person, the last one to die, would remain unburied. They dug up their own graves. The .opposite party was enjoying the scene

On the second day, 'Abdul-Muttalib exhorted his companions that it

was cowardice to succumb to death like that without making a last effort. Thus, he rode his camel, and the camel arose. In doing so, its foot hit the earth and Lo! A stream of cool sweet water appeared! 'Abdul-Muttalib cried "Allahu Akbar!" His companions, too, cried "Allahu Akbar!" They quenched their thirst, filled their water-skins, and then, 'Abdul Muttalib invited the opposite group to fill their water-skins from that fountain. His own companions objected, but he said, "If we do the same as they had done, there would be no difference between us and them."

The whole caravan gathered around that fountain. They drank and filled their water-skins. Then they said: "O 'AbdulMuttalib! By Allah! Allah has decided between you and us. He has given you victory. By Allah, we will never dispute with you about Zamzam. The same Allah who has created this fountain here in this desert for you has given Zamzam to you."

Zamzam became the personal property of 'Abdul-Muttalib. He dug the well deeper. Two deer made of gold, some swords and coats of mail were found buried therein. Again, the Quraish demanded a share in the treasure. Again, 'Abdul-Muttalib refused. At last, the dispute was decided by lot which gave the golden deer to the Ka'bah and the swords and the coats of mail to 'Abdul Muttalib; the Quraish got nothing.

It was then that 'Abdul-Muttalili dedicated one-fifth of his own share to the Ka'bah.

The Year of the Elephant

The above-mentioned episode happened in his youth. Now we come to

the most important event of his life which took place just eight years before his death. .By then, he was the patriarch of the tribe

The Ethiopian governor of Yemen, Abraha al-Ashram, envied the reverence in which the Ka'bah was held by the Arabs. Being a staunch Christian, he built a big cathedral in Sanaa (the capital of Yemen) and ordered the Arabs to go there for pilgrimage instead. The order was ignored. Not only that; someone entered the cathedral and made it unclean. The wrath of Abraha knew no bounds. In his fury, he decided to avenge it by demolishing and desecrating the Ka'bah itself. He advanced with a large .army towards Mecca

There were many elephants in his army; he himself rode a huge elephant. It was an animal which the Arabs had not seen before, thus the year came to be known as 'Amul-Fil (the year of the elephant), and it started an era for reckoning the years in Arabia. This remained in use until the days of 'Umar ibn al Khattab when, on the .advice of Hazrat 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, he replaced it with the era of Hijra

When news of the advance of Abraha's army came, the Arabian tribes of Quraish, Kinanah, Khuza'ah and Hudhayl joined together to defend the Ka'bah. Abraha sent a small contingent towards Mecca to capture the camels and young people. The .contingent captured many animals, including two hundred of 'Abdul-Muttalib's

Meanwhile, a man from the tribe of Himyar was sent by Abraha to

Quraish to advise them that Abraha had not come to fight them: his only aim was to demolish the Ka'bah. But if the Quraish resisted, they would be crushed. Then followed a frightening description of his huge army, which, admittedly, was much .larger and better equipped than all the tribes put together

Abdul-Muttalib replied to this ultimatum in these words: "By Allah, we do not want to' fight him. So far as this House (the Ka'bah) is concerned, it is the House of Allah; if Allah wants to save His House, He will save it, and if He leaves it unprotected, no one ".can save it

Then 'Abdul-Muttalib, with 'Amr ibn Lu'aba and some other prominent leaders, went to see Abraha. Abraha was informed before hand of the prestige and position of 'Abdul-Muttalib. Also the personality of 'Abdul-Muttalib was very impressive and awe... inspiring. When he entered Abraha's tent, the latter rose from his throne, warmly welcomed him, and seated him beside him on the carpet. During the conversation, 'Abdul-Muttalib requested him to release his camels. Abraha was astonished. He said: "When my eyes fell upon you, I was so impressed by you that had you requested me to withdraw my army and go back to Yemen, I would have granted that request. But now, I have no respect for you. Why? Here I have come to demolish the House which is the religious center of yours and of your forefathers and the foundation of your prestige and respect in Arabia, and you

"!?say nothing to save it; instead, you ask me to return your few camels back to you

Abdul-Muttalib said: "I am the owner of the camels, (therefore, I tried to save them),' and this House has its own Owner Who will surely protect it." Abraha was stunned by this reply. He ordered the camels to be released, and the deputation of Quraish .returned

On the second day, Abraha issued orders to his army to enter Mecca. 'Abdul-Muttalib told the Meccans to leave the city and to seek refuge in the surrounding hills. But he, together with some leading members of Quraish, remained within the precincts of the Ka'bah. Abraha sent someone to warn them to vacate the building. When the messenger came, he asked the people who their leader was. All fingers pointed towards 'Abdul-Muttalib. He was again invited to go to Abraha where he had a talk with him. When he came out, he was heard saying: "The Owner of this House is its Defender, and I am sure He will save it from the attack of the adversaries and will not ".dishonor the servants of His House

Abdul-Muttalib then took hold of the door of the Ka'bah and, crying to Allah, prayed in' :(the following words (of poetry

O Allah! Surely a man defends his own home, therefore, Thou shouldst protect Thy) Own House. Their cross and their wrath can never overcome Thy wrath. O Allah, help .(Thy Own people against the fellows of the cross and its worshippers

Then he, too, went

to the summit of the hill, Abu Qubays. Abraha advanced with his army. Seeing the walls of the Ka'bah, he ordered its demolition. No sooner had the army reached near the Ka'bah than an army of Allah appeared from the western side. A dark cloud of small birds (known in Arabic as Ababil) overshadowed the entire army of Abraha. Each bird had three pebbles: two in its claws and one in its beak. A rain of the pebbles poured down from the birds, and in a few minutes, the whole army was destroyed. .Abraha himself was seriously wounded; he fled towards Yemen but died on the way

:It is to this important event that Allah refers in Chapter ۱۰۵

Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the companions of the Elephant? Did He not make their treacherous plan go astray? And He sent against them birds in flocks, striking them with stones of baked clay, so He rendered them like straw eaten up. ((Qu'ran, ۱۰۵

Some historians have tried to minimize the impact of the Divine intervention by suggesting that the army perished because of an epidemic of smallpox. But such an explanation creates more puzzles than it solves. How was it that the whole army was seized by that epidemic just when it was advancing on the Ka'bah? How was it that not a single soldier survived that epidemic? Why was it that no Meccan caught that contagious epidemic? Moreover, if there was no epidemic in Mecca before or

?after that sudden burst of the plague, where did the epidemic come from

This epoch-making episode happened in ۵۷۰ A.D. It was in the same year that the Holy .Prophet of Islam was born to `Abdullah and Amina

Faith of the Ancestors of the Holy Prophet

point

It is the accepted belief of the Shi'a Ithna-Asheris, the Hanafis, and the Shafi'is that the ancestors of the Holy Prophet from 'Abdullah to Qidar ibn Isma'il, and from there right up to Adam, were true believers. They believed in the One and Only God and faithfully followed the Divine religion of their times. From Qidar to 'Abdullah, all of them followed the Shari'ah of Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.), which was the religion .prescribed for them by God

The famous Sunni scholar Imam Jalaluddin as-Suyuti has written nine books on this subject and has proved beyond doubt that all the ancestors of the Holy Prophet were true believers. Shaykh 'Abdul-Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi has written: "All the ancestors of the Holy Prophet from Adam up to 'Abdullah were pure and clean from the uncleanness of disbelief and paganism. It was not possible for Allah to put that Holy Light (of the Holy Prophet) into dark and dirty places, i.e. the loin of a pagan man or the womb of a pagan woman. Also, how could it be possible for Allah to punish the ancestors of the Holy Prophet on the Day of judgement and thus humiliate him in the "?eyes of the world

The Holy Prophet himself has said: "I was always being transferred from the

".loins of the clean ones to the wombs of the clean ones

Allamah al-Majlisi has written that it is the unanimous belief of Shi'a scholars that the' father, mother and all ancestors of the Holy Prophet followed the true religion, and his Light never entered into the loin of any pagan man or the womb of any pagan woman. Also, the accepted traditions say that all his ancestors were "Siddiqun" (Truthful .Ones): They were either prophets or successors of prophets

After Isma'il, all his ancestors were successors of Isma'il (a.s.). Other traditions specify that 'Abdul-Muttalib was a "Hujjat (Proof) of Allah and that Abu Talib was his ".successor

Amirul-Mu'minin 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) said: "By Allah, neither my father ever worshipped the idols, nor my grandfather 'Abdul-Muttalib, nor his father Hashim, nor his father 'Abd Munaf. They prayed facing towards the Ka'bah and followed the ".religion of Ibrahim

If you look again at the preceding life-sketches of some of the ancestors of the Holy Prophet, you will find that many traditions established by them are now included into the tenets of Islam. Qusayi started the night-stay at Mash'arul-Haram during the hajj, and Allah kept that system in Islam. Can anybody think that Allah would confirm a ?religious rite established by a pagan

Likewise, as we have seen the customs established by 'Abdul-Muttalib were adopted ?in Islam. Could Allah glorify 'Abdul-Muttalib if he were a pagan

Also, read again the events of the discovery of Zamzam and the appearance of the well in the desert. Read

again the events of 'Amul-Fil, and see the firm conviction that Allah would surely save His House. That statement, repeated several times, shows that 'Abdul-Muttalib knew what was going to happen. Why was he so sure? There can only be one explanation: He was informed by Allah. And this, in turn, proves the earlier statement that he was a ."Hujjat" of Allah

In all these events and narrations, he is always seen praying to Allah, and there is no hint from any quarter that he ever prayed to the idols of Quraish (to Hubal, Lat or 'Uzza). When he finds Zamzam, he exclaims "Allahu Akbar!" When he emphasizes anything, he swears by the name of Allah. When he stakes his claim, he says that Allah gave it to him. What further proof is needed to show that it was a family of True ?Believers

The Holy Prophet said: "Jibril (Gabriel) said to me: 'I searched the east and the west of the earth, but I did not find anyone superior to Muhammad; and I searched the east and the west of the earth, but I did not find the children of any father better than the ".children of Hashim

Also, the Holy Prophet said: "Verily, Allah chose Kinanah from the children of Isma'il, and He selected Quraish from Kinanah and chose the children of Hashim from the ".Quraish, and selected me from the children of Hashim

Abdullah'

When, at the discovery of Zamzam, 'Abdul-Muttalib encountered the enmity of Quraish, he was quite worried because

he had only one son to help him. He, therefore, prayed to Allah, making a nadhr (vow) that if Allah gave him ten sons to help him against his enemies, he would sacrifice one of them to please Allah. His prayer was granted, and Allah gave him twelve sons, out of whom five are famous in the Islamic history: 'Abdullah, Abu Talib, Hamza, 'Abbas and Abu Lahab. The other seven were: Harith (already mentioned), Zubayr, Ghaydaq, Muqawwim, Dharar, Qutham., and Hijl (or Mughira). He had six daughters: 'Atikah, .Umaymah, Baydha', Barrah, Safiyyah, and Arwi

When ten sons were born, 'Abdul-Muttalib decided to sacrifice one of them according to his nadhr. Lot was cast and 'Abdullah's name came out. 'Abdullah was the dearest to him, but he did not flinch from the decision of the fate. He took 'Abdullah's hands and started towards the place where sacrifices were offered. His daughters started crying and begged him to sacrifice ten camels in place of 'Abdullah. At first 'Abdul-.Muttalib refused

But when the pressure of the whole family (and in fact, the whole tribe) mounted, he agreed to cast lot between 'Abdullah and ten camels. Again the name of 'Abdullah came out. On the suggestion of the people, the number of the camels was increased to twenty, again, the same result. Repeatedly, the number was increased to thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty and ninety. But the result was always the same. At .last the lot was cast between ١٠٠ camels and 'Abdullah

Now

the lot came out for the camels. The family was jubilant, but 'Abdul Muttalib was not satisfied. He said: "Ten times the name of 'Abdullah has come out. It is not fair to ignore those lots just for one lot." Three times more, he repeated the lot between Abdullah and ۱۰۰ camels, and every time the lot came out for the camels. Then he .sacrificed the camels and the life of 'Abdullah was saved

It was to this incident that the Holy Prophet referred when he said: "I am the son of .the two sacrifices." He meant the sacrifices of Isma'iI and 'Abdullah

The name of the mother of 'Abdullah was Fatimah, daughter of 'Amr ibn `Aidh ibn 'Amr ibn Makhzum. She was also the mother of Abu Talib, Zubayr, Baydha', .Umaymah, Barra and 'Atikah

A year before "the year of the elephant," 'Abdullah was married to Aminah daughter of Wahb ibn 'Abd Munaf ibn Zuhrah ibn Kilab. In that very gathering, 'Abdul-Muttalib married Hala, daughter of Wuhaib, i.e. cousin of Aminah. Hala gave birth to Hamza, and Thawbiyah, the slave-girl of Abu-Lahab, breast-fed him. She also gave her milk to the Holy Prophet for some time. Thus, Hamza was the uncle of the Holy Prophet and also his cousin as well as foster brother. Various traditions put the age of 'Abdullah at .the time of his marriage at ۱۷, ۲۴ or ۲۷ years

Abdullah went with a trade caravan to Syria. While returning, he fell ill and stayed at' Yathrib (Medina). When 'Abdul-Muttalib

sent Harith to look after him and bring him back, he had already passed away. 'Abdullah was buried in Yathrib. The Wahhabis walled up his grave and nobody was allowed to visit it. Then, in the ۱۹۷۰s the Wahhabis dug up his body together with those of ۷ companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and buried them somewhere else under the .pretext of extending the Mosque

Abdullah had left some camels, goats, and a slave-girl, Ummu Ayman. The Holy' .Prophet got it all as his inheritance

Early Years

The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is born

Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was born in such a family on Friday, the ۱۷th Rabi'-ul-Awwal, ۱st year of 'Amul-Fil (corresponding to ۵۷۰ C.E.) to bring the Message of God to the world. In Sunni circles, ۱۲th Rabi'-ul-Awwal is more famous. Thus, the prayer of Ibrahim :while constructing the Ka'bah was granted

Lord! And raise a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them Thine verses, and teach them the Book and the wisdom, and purify them, indeed Thou art the .(Mighty, the Wise (Qur'an, ۲:۱۲۹

-:And the tidings of Christ came true

O Children of Israel! Surely, I am the messenger of Allah to you, verifying that which is before me of the Torah and giving the good news of a Messenger who will come after (me whose name will be Ahmed. (Qur'an, ۶۱:۶

Abdullah, father of the Prophet, died a few month before (or two months after) his' birth, and his grandfather 'AbdulMuttalib took over the care and upbringing of the child. After a few months, according

to the age-long custom of the Arabs, the child was entrusted to a bedouin woman .Halimah by name, of the tribe of Bani-Sa'd, for his upbringing

When he was only six years old, he lost his mother as well; so, the doubly-orphaned child was brought up by 'Abdul-Muttalib with the most tender care. It was the will of God that the Prophet to-be should undergo all the sufferings, pains and privations incidental to human life in order that he might learn to bear them with becoming fortitude and raise his stature in human perfection. Not two years had passed before .'Abdul-Muttalib also expired

Abdul-Muttalib died at the age of ۸۲, leaving the care and custody of the orphaned' Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) to Abu Talib. Abu Talib and his wife, Fatimah Bint Asad, loved Muhammad more than their own children. As the Holy Prophet himself said, Fatima Bint Asad was his "mother" who kept her own children waiting while she fed the Holy Prophet, kept her own children cold while she gave him warm clothes. Abu Talib .always kept the child with him day and night

Abu Talib had succeeded 'Abdul-Muttalib in Siqayah and Rifadah and was an active participant in the trade caravans. When Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was ۱۲ years old, Abu Talib bade farewell to his family to go to Syria. Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) clung to him and cried. Abu Talib was so moved that he took the child with him. When the caravan reached Busra in Syria they, as usual, stayed near the monastery

.of a monk, Buhayra

It is not possible to give here the full account of that visit. Suffice it to say that the monk, seeing some of the signs, which he knew from the old books, was convinced that the orphan child was the last Prophet-to-be. To make sure, he started a conversation with him, and at one point said: "I give you oath of Lat and Uzza to tell me..." The child cried out: "Don't take the names of Lat and Uzza before me! I hate them!" Buhayra was now convinced. He advised Abu Talib not to proceed to Damascus "because if the Jews found out what I have seen, I am afraid they will try ".to harm him. For sure, this child is to have a great eminence

Abu Talib, acting on this advice, sold all his merchandise for cheaper prices then and .there, returning at once to Mecca

(Sacrilegious War (Harb-ul-Fijar) and League of Virtuous (Hilful-Fudhul

At a place known as 'Ukaz, a great annual fair used to be held during the month of Dhul-Qa'dah during which war and bloodshed were forbidden. At the time of the fair, 'Ukaz presented a scene of pleasure and abandonment with its dancing girls, gaming tables, drunken orgies, poetic contests and shows of prowess ending frequently in brawls and bloodshed. At one of the fairs, war broke out between the Quraish and the .Banu Kinanah on one side and the Qais 'Aylan on the other

This war continued for a number of years with a considerable loss of life and

varying fortunes. The lewd scenes, drunken affrays and the horrors of the war must have created a deep impression on Muhammad's sensitive mind. When the Quraish were ultimately victorious, a league was formed, on the suggestion of Zubayr, an uncle of the Prophet, to prevent disturbances of peace, to help victims of oppression, and to protect travelers. Muhammad took a very active interest in the functioning of this League which came into being as a result of a settlement known as Hilf-ul-Fudhul between Banu Hashim, Banu Taym, Banu Asad, Banu Zuhrah and Banu Muttalib. The League continued to function for half a century following the inception of Islam.

Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) marries Khadijah

Now, Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was old enough to go with the trade caravans. But Abu Talib's financial position had become very weak because of the expenses of Rifadah and Siqayah, and it was no longer possible for him to equip Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) with the merchandise on his own. He, therefore, advised him to act as agent for a noble lady, Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, who was the wealthiest person in Quraish. It is written that in the trade caravans, her merchandise usually equaled the merchandise of the whole tribe put together.

Her genealogy joins with that of the Holy Prophet at Qusayi. She was Khadijah daughter of Khuwaylid ibn Asad ibn 'Abdul-'Uzza ibn Qusayi.

The reputation which Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) enjoyed for his honesty and integrity, led Khadijah to willingly entrust her goods to him for sale in Syria. He traded in such a way that the

goods earned more profit than expected, and yet he was praised for his integrity, honesty and generosity. Khadijah was very much impressed. Only two months after his return to Mecca, he was married to Khadijah. He was twenty-five years of age and .Khadijah was forty and a widow

Reconstruction of the Ka'bah

In about ۶۰۵ A.D., when the Holy Prophet was ۳۵ years old, a flood swept Mecca and the building of the Ka'bah was badly damaged. The Quraish decided to rebuild it. When the walls reached a certain height, a dispute arose between various clans as to whom should the honor of placing the Black Stone (Hajar Aswad) in its place go. This dispute threatened to assume serious proportions but, at last, it was agreed upon that the first person to enter the precincts of the Ka'bah the next morning should .arbitrate this issue

It so happened, that first person was none other than Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). The Quraish were pleased with the turn of the events because Muhammad was well .recognized as the Truthful and Trust-worthy personality

Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) put his own robe on the ground and put the Black Stone on it. He told the disputing clans to send one representative each to hold the corners of the robe and to raise it. When the robe was raised to the required level, he took hold of the Stone and put it in its place. This was a judgement, which settled the dispute to the .satisfaction of all the parties

At this time, he had entered

into several business partnerships and always acted with great integrity in his dealings with his partners. 'Abdullah, son of Abu Hamza, narrates that he had entered into a transaction with Muhammad (s.a.w.a.). Its details had yet to be finalized when he had suddenly to leave promising that he would return soon. When, after three days, he went again to the spot, he found Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) waiting for him. Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) did not remonstrate with him. He just said that he had been there for all those three days waiting for him. Saib and Qays, who also had business transactions with him, testify to his exemplary dealings. People were so impressed by his uprightness and integrity, by the purity of his life, his unflinching fidelity, and his .strict sense of duty that they called him "al-Amin," the trusted one

The Age of Ignorance

It was an age of ignorance (ayyamul-jahiliyyah) in which, generally speaking moral rectitude and the spiritual code had long been forgotten. Superstitious rites and .dogmas had replaced the tenets of the Divine religion

Only a few Quraishites (the ancestors of the Holy Prophet and a handful of others) remained followers of the religion of Ibrahim (a.s.), but they were an exception and were not able to exert any influence on others who were deeply submerged in pagan rites and beliefs. There were thoge who did not believe in God at all and thought that :life was just a natural phenomenon. It is about these people that the Qur'an says

And they say: There is

nothing but our life of this world; we live and die and nothing but time annihilates us. ((Qur'an, ۴۵:۲۴

Some believed in God but not in the Day of Resurrection or reward and punishment. It :is against their belief that the Qur'an says

(Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first. (Qur'an, ۳۶:۷۹

While a few believed in God as well as in the reward and punishment in the life hereafter, they did not believe in Prophethood. It is about them that the Qur'an has :said

And they say: What sort of prophet is he that eats and goes about in the market? ((Qur'an, ۲۵:۷

But, by and large, the Arabs were idolaters. They did not, however, recognize idols as :God but only as intermediaries to God. As the Qur'an has pointed out, they said

(We do not worship them save so that they may bring us nearer to Allah.(Qur'an, ۳۹:۳

Some tribes worshipped the sun, others the moon. But the great majority, while indulging in idolatry, believed that there was a Supreme Being, the Creator of the :heavens and the earth whom they called "Allah." The Qur'an says

And if you ask them: Who has created the heavens and the earth and made the sun and the moon subservient?, they will cry out 'Allah'. Then whither are they going? ((Qur'an, ٢٩:٦١

And when they sail in boats, they sincerely solicit the aid of Allah, but when He brings them safely to the land, behold! They ascribe

(others (with Him). (Qur'an, ۲۹:۶۵

Christianity and Judaism, in the hands of their then followers in Arabia, had lost their .appeal

:Sir William Muir writes

Christianity had now and then feebly rippled the surface of Arabia and the sterner influences of Judaism had been occasionally visible in a deeper and more troubled current, but the tide of indigenous idolatry and superstition, setting out from every quarter with an unbroken and unebbing surge towards the Ka'bah, gave ample evidence that the faith and worship of the Ka'bah held the Arab mind in thralldom, vigorous and undisputed. After five centuries of Christian evangelization, it could only claim a sprinkling of disciples among the tribes, and as a converting agent was no .longer operative

The Dawn of Prophethood

point

It was a man from among themselves who was to lift the Arabs from their slough of .ignorance and depravity into the light of faith and devotion to one God

Because of its geographical position and connection by land and sea routes with the continents of Asia, Africa and Europe, Arabia had been powerfully influenced by the superstitious beliefs and evil ways prevailing in many parts of these continents. But once it forsook disbelief and unbecoming practices, it could, as a result of the same

geographical position, easily become the center of enlightenment radiating guidance .and knowledge to the entire world

When Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) was ۳۸ years of age, he spent most of his time in meditation and solitude. The cave of the mount Hira was his favorite place. It is there

that he used to retire with food and water and spend days and weeks in remembrance of Allah. Nobody was allowed to go there except Khadijah and 'Ali. He .used to spend the whole month of Ramadhan therein

The period of waiting had come to a close. His forty years of life had varied experiences, and from the world's point of view, he had developed a maturity of mind and judgement, although in reality he was the embodiment of perfection from the very beginning. He has said: "I was a prophet when Adam was between water and clay." His heart was overflowing with profound compassion for mankind and a pressing urge to eradicate wrong beliefs, social evils, cruelty and injustice. The moment had arrived when he was to be allowed to declare his prophethood. One day, when he was in the cave of Hira, Jibril (Gabriel) came to him and conveyed to him the :following message of Allah

Read in the name of thy Lord Who created, created man from a clot (of congealed blood): Read and thy Lord is most Bountiful, no taught with the pen, taught man that (which he knew not. (Qur'an, ۹۶:۱-۵

These were the first ayats to be revealed, and the date was the ۲۷th of Rajab, ۴۰th .().year of elephant (۶۱۰ C.E

The flow of the Divine message which continued for the next twenty-three years had begun, and the Prophet had arisen to proclaim the Unity of God and the Unity of Mankind, to demolish the edifice

of superstition, ignorance, and disbelief, to set up a noble conception of life, and to .lead mankind to the light of faith and celestial bliss

Commencement of the Mission

The task was stupendous. The Prophet, therefore, started his mission cautiously, confining it initially to his own close relatives and friends. He was met with immediate success. His wife Khadijah testified to his truth as soon as she heard the news of the revelation from God. Then his cousin 'Ali, and his liberated slave and adopted son Zaid, readily accepted the new faith, Islam, "submission to the Will of God." The fourth was .Abu Bala

Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani in his book Al-Isabah, and 'Abdul Malik ibn Hisham in his book :As-Sirah have written that

Ali was the first to accept Islam and pray (offer salat), and that he accepted" whatever was revealed to the Messenger by the Lord. At that time, 'Ali was only ten years old. After 'Ali, Zaid ibn Harithah accepted the Islamic creed and prayed and then Abu Bakr embraced Islam. The companions of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ibn Ka'b al-Qarzi, Salman the Persian, Abu Dharr, Miqdad, Khabbab, Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri and Zaid ibn al-Arqam testify that 'Ali was the first to proclaim Islam. These celebrated ".companions have given'Ali preference over others

:Justice Ameer Ali writes in his Spirit of Islam

It is a noble feature in the history of the Prophet of Arabia, and one which strongly"

attests the sincerity of his character, the purity of his teachings and the intensity of his faith in

p: ۳۳

God, that his nearest relations, his wife, beloved cousin and intimate friends, were most thoroughly imbued with the truth of his mission and convinced of his inspiration. Those who knew him best, closest relations and dearest friends, people who lived ".with him and noted all his movements, were his sincere and most devoted followers

:John Davenport writes in his Apology for Mohammed and the Koran

It is strongly corroborative of Mohammed's sincerity that the earliest converts to" Islam were his bosom friends and the people of his household, who, all intimately acquainted with his private life, could not fail to have detected those discrepancies which more or less invariably exist between the pretensions of the hypocritical ".deceiver and his actions at home

Slowly the message spread. During the first three years, he gained only thirty followers. In spite of the caution and care exercised, the Quraish were well posted with what was going on. At first they did not take much note and only jeered at the Prophet and the plight of his followers. They doubted his sanity and thought him .crazed and possessed. But the time had come for proclaiming the will of God in public

Calling the Near Ones

:After three years, the call came from Allah

(And warn thy near relations (Qur'an, ۲۶:۲۱۴

This ayat (verse) ended the period of secret preaching and heralded the open .proclamation of Islam

Abu Muhammad Husain al-Baghawi (in his Tafisir-Ma'alim ut-Tanzil), Shaikh 'Ala'uddin 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Baghdadi, known as Khazin al-Baghdadi, in his Lubab-ut-Ta'wil, best known as Tafsir Khazin, Abu

Bakr Ahmad ibn Husain al-Bayhaqi (in his Dalail-un-Nubuwwah), Jalaluddin as-Suyuti (in his Jam'ul Jawami), 'Ala'uddin 'Ali Muttaqi (in Kanz-ul-'Ummal), Abu JaTer Muhammad ibn Jarir at-Tabari (in Tarikh-ur-Rusul-wal-Muluk), Abu Sa'adat Mubarak ibn Athir al-Jazari (in Tarikh-ul-Kamil) and Isma'il Abul Fida (in his history, Kitab-ul-Mukhtasar fi Akhbar-il-Bashar) have quoted 'Ali as saying:

When the verse Wa andhir 'Ashiratakal-aqrabin was revealed, the noble Messenger" called me and ordered me, 'O 'Ali! The Creator of the world has made me warn my people about their doom, but in view of the condition of the people and knowing that when I will give them the words of Allah, they will misbehave, I felt depressed and weakened and therefore I kept quiet until Gabriel came again and informed me that there should be no more delay.

Therefore, O 'Ali, take a measure of food grain, a leg of a goat and a big bowl of milk and arrange for a feast, then call the sons of 'Abdul Muttalib unto me, so that I may deliver to them the words of Allah.' I did what the Prophet had told me to do and the sons of 'Abdul Muttalib, who were about forty in number gathered together. Among them were the uncles of the Prophet: Abu Talib, Hamza, 'Abbas and Abu Lahab.

When the food was brought, the Prophet lifted a piece of meat and tore it into small morsels with his own teeth and scattered the pieces on the tray and said, 'Start eating in the name of

Allah,' All people present there had the food to their fill although the milk and the food were just sufficient for one man. Then he intended to speak to them, but Abu Lahab interfered and said, `Verily, your comrade has entranced you.' Having heard this, all .of them dispersed and the Messenger did not get a chance to speak to them

On the next day, the Messenger, of the Lord again said to me: 'O 'Ali? Make arrangements again for a feast as you had done yesterday, and invite the sons of 'Abdul Muttalib'. I arranged for the feast and gathered the guests as I was asked to do by the Prophet. Once they had finished the food, the Messenger addressed them thus: 'O sons of 'AbdulMuttalib, I have brought for you the best blessings of this world and of the next, and I am appointed by the Lord to call you unto Him. Therefore, who amongst you will help me in this cause in order that he should be my brother, my '?successor and my caliph

Nobody responded. But I, although the youngest of the congregation, said, 'O Messenger of Allah, I am here to be your helper in this task.' The Prophet then patted my neck very kindly and said, 'O my people! This 'Ali is my brother, my successor and my caliph amongst you. Listen to him and obey him.' Having heard it from the Prophet, they all burst into laughter and said to Abu Talib, 'Hearken! You

'" !are ordered to obey and follow your own son

This event has also been recorded by Thomas Carlyle in Heroes and Hero Worship, by Gibbon in Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Davenport in Apology for Muhammad and The Koran and by Washington Irving in Muhammad And His .Successors, with all its details

Abul-Fida, in Kitabul-Mukhtasar fi Akhbaril-Bashar states that some of the verses composed by Abu Talib prove the fact that he had accepted the Prophethood of the :Prophet from the core of his heart. A translation of a few poetic verses is given here

You have called me (to Islam) and I believe that you are truthful, straightforward and .trustworthy

And there is no doubt in my belief that the religion of Muhammad is the best of all the .religions of the world

By God! As far as I am alive, not a single person from among the Quraish can harm .you

Persecution Begins

:Then one after another came the Divine commands

(Disclose what has been ordained to thee. (Qur'an, ۱۵.۹۴

O thou wrapped (in thy mantle!) Arise and warn, and thy Lord do magna. And thy raiment do purify. And uncleanness do shun. And show not favor seeking gain! And for the sake of thy Lord be patient. " (Qur'an, ۷۴:۱-۷)

:The method to be employed was

Call to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and dispute with them in the best way. (Qur'an, ۱۶:۱۲۵)

The Prophet proclaimed the Oneness of God in the Ka'bah. The Quraish were

aghast. Till then, they had held the Prophet and his followers in contemptuous disdain, but now they were genuinely alarmed. The new movement amounted to a denunciation of their forefathers. It meant the termination, in one stroke, of their .authority and privilege as the guardians of the Ka'bah

The Quraish retaliated violently. A life and death struggle for-Islam ensued. The Prophet was not allowed to worship in the Ka'bah, thorns were strewn in his way, dirt and filth were thrown at him while he was engaged in prayers, and street urchins were incited to follow him, shouting and clapping their hands in derision. He and his followers were subjected to all types of calumnies and humiliation. They were taunted .and insulted

Oppression and relentless persecution were let loose. In an effort to force believers to renounce the new faith and to go back to the old cults, they were subjected to extremes of physical torture. They were mercilessly beaten, made to lie on burning sand while heavy blocks of stones were placed on their chests, or nooses were put .around their necks and their bodies dragged

One of the faithful, Yasir by name, succumbed to these tortures and, when his wife Sumayyah, an African, protested, her legs were tied to two camels, and the animals were driven to opposite directions, tearing her body in halves. These were the first martydoms in the cause of Islam. The believers, under the inspiration of their great Teacher, were, however, fired with holy zeal. They

.braved all persecutions and danger and bore up against all agonies and tortures

First and Second Hijrahs to Abyssinia

When endurance was reaching its limits and persecution became unbearable, the Prophet advised a group of his followers to migrate to Abyssinia where a benign Christian king reigned. This was the first Hijrah (Migration) in Islam and fifteen people :took part in it

And those who become fugitives for Allah's sake after they are oppressed, verily We shall give them good abode in the world and surely the reward of the Hereafter is (greater, if they only knew. (Qur'an, ۱۶:۴۱

And what was all this tyranny and persecution for? Just for believing in one God and for leading a chaste and pious life! Further migration of some people led to intensified persecution of those left behind. The Prophet advised a second Hijrah to Abyssinia, and this time about a hundred people, including Jafar, the elder brother of 'Ali, went .away

The Quraish sent a deputation with 'Amr ibn al-'As and 'Ammara ibn Rabi'ah to Negus (Nijashi, in Arabic), the king of Abyssinia, to demand the deportation of the emigrants back to Mecca to be punished by death. Having won the favor of the clergy, the deputation tried to prejudice the king against the fugitives. Asked to explain the position, Jafar delivered a speech, which is a brilliant summary of the fundamentals of :Islam and all that it stands for

O king! We were plunged in the depth of ignorance and barbarism; we adored idols;" we lived in unchastity; we

ate dead animals, and we spoke abomination. We disregarded every feeling of humanity, and the duties of hospitality and neighborhood. We knew no law but that of the strong. At that time, God raised from among us a man of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty and purity we were aware, and he called us to the Unity of God .and taught us not to associate anything with Him

He forbade us to worship idols and enjoined us to speak the truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful, and to regard the rights of neighbors. He forbade us to speak ill of women and to eat the substance of orphans. He ordered us to flee from vices, to abstain from evil, to offer prayers, to render alms, and to observe the fast. We have believed in him; we have accepted his teachings and injunctions to worship God, and not to associate anything with Him. For this reason, our people have risen against us and persecuted us in order to make us forego the worship of God and return to the worship of idols of wood and stone and other abominations. They have tortured us and injured us. Having found no safety among them, we have come to thy country ".and hope thou wilt protect us from their oppression

The king refused to oblige the deputation, and the latter had to return disappointed. .Muslim traditions indicate that the king later on secretly converted to Islam

Some European critics, with the object of

assigning some ulterior motive for the migration, go to the length of saying that persecution was only slight and at worst confined to slaves and the poorer people who could find no clans to protect them. There is a mass of historical data recorded in original sources about the names and numbers of persons put to physical torture, the .names of their tormentors and the manner of their physical torture and persecution

Although these critics admit that even Abu Bakr had to undergo the indignity of being bound to a clansman and to solicit the protection of a nomadic chief, they would still suggest that the persecution was limited to persons who had no clans to support them. Such people had, no doubt, the worst of the treatment, but when people of a clan were oppressing their fellow clansmen for accepting Islam, clan protection could not help the victims. What protection could be expected from the clan when a father ?chained his son, a brother tortured his sister, or a husband injured his wife

Furthermore, the slaves and the poor people constituted the bulk of the disciples at that stage. A Western historian surmises that the migration was caused either by a rift in the Muslim ranks, as some Muslims might not have liked the attitude of the Prophet towards Meccan opposition, or was undertaken with the object of making Abyssinia a base of attacking Meccan trade or to solicit military help to enable the Prophet to seize control of

Mecca. Even Encyclopedia Britannica tries to water down the persecution (Macro. Vol. ۱۲. p. ۶۰۷):

There was little physical violence, and that almost always within the family." Muhammad suffered from minor annoyances, such as having filth deposited outside his door."

About the emigration to Ethiopia it suggests:

"... but they may have been seeking opportunities for trade or military support for Muhammad."

If such fantastic conjectures can be made when the Muslims were yet a handful and survival was the only consideration before them, when all along they stood solidly behind the Prophet, when no Meccan caravan was ever attacked from Abyssinia, when that country never provided any military help to the Muslims, and when the Prophet did not seize control of Mecca even when it lay at his feet, what fairness in exposition and presentation can be expected from such historians?

Deputations of Quraish

Now we have reached the sixth year after the Declaration of Prophethood. In spite of the persecution and exodus of some people, the Prophet was laboring quietly but incessantly to wean away his people from the worship of idols. His mission gained considerable momentum by the conversion of his uncle Hamza the Valiant.

Once, at the suggestion of Abu Bakr, the Holy Prophet came into Masjid-ul-Haram and Abu Bakr started a lecture. The Quraish violently stopped him and the Holy Prophet had to take refuge in the house of al-Arqam near the hill of Safa. (Now, that house has been included into the extension of Masjid-ul-Haram). 'Umar ibn al-Khattab accepted Islam in those

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.days

Because of the prestige of Abu Talib, Quraish did not dare to kill the Holy Prophet. But they were making him suffer as much affliction as possible, no less was the heartache caused to him by the sufferings of the helpless Muslims. He himself said: "No prophet ".was ever made to suffer such afflictions as I was

All along, Islam was gaining adherents not only from Quraish but also from the neighboring tribes. The oligarchy of Mecca was now desperately trying to. stem the .movement

The forbearance of the Holy Prophet was making the Quraish wonder as to why a man should put himself in such a precarious situation. Their outlook was materialistic; their ideals were wealth, beauty and power. They, naturally, ascribed the same .motives to the Holy Prophet

Utbah ibn Rabi'ah, father-in-law of Abu Sufyan, was sent to him to convey the' :message of Quraish

Muhammad! If you want power and prestige, we will make you the overlord of" Mecca. Or do you want marriage in a big family? You may have the hand of the fairest maiden in the land. Do you want hoards of silver and gold? We can provide you with all these and even more. But you should forsake this nefarious preaching which implies ".that our forefathers, who were worshipping these deities of ours, were fools

The Quraish were almost certain that Muhammad would respond favorably to this offer. However, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) recited Sura ۴۱ in reply, which, inter alia, :contained the following warning

But if they turn

away, then say: ١ have warned you of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt of the 'Ad and .(the Thamud. (Qur'an, ۴١:١٣

Utbah was overwhelmed with this ringing warning. He did not accept Islam but` advised the Quraish to leave Muhammad alone and to see how he fares with other .tribes. Quraish said that he, too, was bewitched by Muhammad

Then a deputation was sent to Abu Talib. They demanded that Abu Talib should either persuade his nephew to desist from his mission or hand him over to suffer the extreme penalty or be prepared to fight the whole tribe. Finding the odds too heavy :against him, Abu Talib said to the Holy Prophet

".O son! Do not put such a burden on my shoulders which I am unable to bear"

The Prophet's reply to his uncle gives an indication of his indomitable will, his profound :trust in God and confidence in his Mission. Said he

O uncle! If they placed the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left to persuade" me to renounce my work, verily I would not desist there from till God makes manifest ".His cause or I perish in the attempt

Saying this, he was overwhelmed with grief. Abu Talib was moved by this reply and :said

By Allah, the Quraish can never reach thee in spite of their great number till I am" buried in the earth. Therefore, pronounce what order thou hast; nobody can do any harm to you; be happy with this (promise) and keep thy

".(eyes cool (i.e. be consoled

In their final attempt, they took a young man, 'Ammarah ibn al-Walid, to Abu Talib and :offered to exchange him with Muhammad. They said to him

This young man is a well-known poet of the tribe; he is also very handsome and wise." You better exchange Muhammad with him. You may adopt him as your son: he will be a good helper to you. And give us your Muhammad; we will-kill him. Thus, you will not suffer any loss because you will have 'Ammarah in place of Muhammad, and by ".eliminating Muhammad, all this strife and friction in the tribe will come to an end

Abu Talib was extremely furious on hearing this outrageous proposal. His voice was :raised in wrath. He said

What a worst bargain have you proposed! Why, you want me to give you my son, so" that you may kill him, and are giving me your son so that I should feed him and look ".after him? Go away! This bargain is nothing if not foolishness

Ban on the Clans of Hashim and Muttalib

Frustrated, the idolaters decided to ostracize the whole clans of Hashim and Muttalib and thus destroy them completely. An agreement was signed to boycott these two clans. It was written by Mansur ibn 'Ikrimah and was hung in the Ka'bah. The :agreement stated

they would neither take the daughters of these two clans nor will they give them" their daughters in marriage; they would neither sell anything to them nor buy anything from them. Not only that, they would not

have any contact with them nor even allow any food or drink to reach them.This ".boycott would continue till these clans agree to hand over Muhammad to Quraish

Abu Talib had no alternative but to take these two clans (who had always stood together) into the mountain trail called Shi'b Abi Talib. It was adjacent to Jannatu '۱-Ma'la. Now it is difficult to locate, because the Sa'udis are destroying all historical sites in the name of development. It was a place in Mount Hajun, which belonged to Abu .Talib. There were ۴۰ adults in the clans. For three long years, they were beleaguered

It had begun in Muharram, ۷th year of Bi'that (Declaration of Prophethood) and continued up to the beginning of the ۱۰th year. They were made to undergo the most acute hardships and privations, so much so that at times they had nothing but tree leaves to sustain them. Only twice a year did they dare to come out: in the months of Rajab and Dhul-Hijjah, when every type of violence was taboo according to the Arabian custom. If any relative sent them any food, and the news leaked out, that relative was publicly insulted and put to shame. The Quraishites used to express their .pleasure on hearing the cries of the hungry children

During all these years of sufferings, Abu Talib had only one worry: how to keep the Holy Prophet out of the harm's way. Historians unanimously say that it was the habit of Abu Talib to awaken

the Holy Prophet after all people had gone to sleep and to take him to another place and order one of his own sons or brothers to sleep in the bed of the Holy Prophet. This was done so that if an enemy had seen where Muhammad was sleeping, and if an attack was made on him at night, his own son or brother would be killed while the Holy .Prophet would be saved

All of them suffered these hardships and did their utmost to save the life of the Holy Prophet. History is unable to produce another example of such devotion and loyalty. And imagine that this continued not for one or two days or weeks, but for three long .years

:One day the Holy Prophet said to Abu Talib

I have been informed by Allah that the agreement of the Quraish has been eaten up" ".by insects, and no writing has been left therein except the name of Allah

And as the historians write, Abu Talib never had any doubt about any saying of the .Holy Prophet

Thus he came out of his place at once and went to Masjidul-Haram where Quraish had gathered. As luck would have it, the subject of discussion was the same boycott. Hisham, son of 'Amr, Zubayr, and a few others who were related to Khadijah and the clans of Hashim and Muttalib and whose houses were near the Shi'b of Abu Talib used to hear the cries of the children day and night. They had decided to

persuade the Quraish to abrogate the infamous agreement. The arguments became very heated and reached a climax when they saw Abu Talib approaching. Abu Jahl :and others who opposed the idea of abrogating the boycott, said

Abu Talib is coming! It seems that now he is tired and wants to hand over" Muhammad to us. Thus, the boycott would end to the satisfaction of us all. Let us keep ".silent and hear what he wants to say

But Abu Talib had gone there not to surrender but to challenge them. He stood before :the gathering and said

My son says that the agreement which you had written has been eaten up by insects," and that nothing remains therein except the name of Allah. Now look at that paper. If the news given by my son is correct, then you must end your injustice and high-handedness, and if the news is wrong then we will admit that you were right and we ".were wrong

The agreement was taken out and opened, and lo, there was nothing left of it except .the name of Allah in one place

Now Abu Talib's voice thundered on as he condemned them for their tyranny. Those who wanted that boycott ended said that now there was no agreement at all to adhere to. Abu Jahl and others tried to outwit them but failed and the boycott ended .with a total moral victory for Islam over the infidels

,The sufferings and privations of those three years took their toll. Within nine months

Abu Talib died and after him Khadijah also left this world. With the disappearance of their protecting influence, the Meccans had a free-hand and redoubled their persecution. These two deaths, at a time when the Holy Prophet was in dire need of both, left a very deep impression on him. He was so grieved that he called that year "'Amul-Huzn" (The Year of Sorrow). How valuable their support was may be judged from the fact that Allah has counted them as two of His highest Graces and Favors .upon the Holy Prophet

:He says in Sura ۹۳

Did He not find thee an orphan and give thee shelter, and He found thee lost (in thy tribe) and guided (them towards thee), and found thee in need and made thee free (from want? (Qur'an, ۹۳:۶-۸

All the commentators of the Qur'an say that the first ayat means: "Did He not find thee an orphan and give thee shelter with Abu Talib?", and the last ayat means: "He found thee poor and made thee rich through Khadijah." If we think about the early history of Islam, without the prestigious influence of Abu Talib, we cannot see how the life of the Holy Prophet could have been saved. And if we were to take out the wealth of Khadijah, we cannot think how the poor Muslims could have been sustained, and .how the two Hijrats of Abyssinia could have been financed

It is not the place here to fully explain the share of Abu Talib in

the foundation of Islam. The best tribute, therefore, would be to quote some of his poetry lines which overflow with love of, and devotion to, the Holy Prophet. Abu Talib :has said these poetic lines

And you have called me and I know that you are truthful

.and, in fact, you were truthful and trustworthy from the beginning

And I certainly know that the religion of Muhammad is the best of all the religions of .... the world

:Also he said in another poem

Did you not know that we have found Muhammad the Prophet the same as was Musa .(Moses)? It is written so in the scriptures

:Compare this poetry with this ayat of the Qur'an

Verily, We have sent you a Messenger to be a witness over you, as We had sent a (Messenger to Pharaoh.(Qur'an, ۷۳:۱۵

:Somewhere else Abu Talib says these poetic lines

,And the Lord of the world has strengthened him with His help

and has proclaimed the religion which is true, not false. Do not they know that our son is not doubted

?(by us and that we do not care about the false sayings (of his enemies

:Once Abu Talib asked 'Ali

"?What is this religion which you are following"

:Ali said'

".I believe in Allah and His Messenger, and I pray with him"

:Abu Talib said

Surely Muhammad will not call us but to a good thing. Never leave Muhammad;" ".follow him faithfully

Once he saw the Holy Prophet praying, with Khadijah and 'Ali behind him. Ja'far was with Abu Talib. Abu Talib told JaTar to go ahead and

.join them in their prayer

When Hamza accepted Islam in the sixth year of bi'that (Declaration of the :Prophethood), Abu Talib was overjoyed and said these poetic lines

Be patient, O Abu Ya'li (Hamza) on account of the religion of Ahmad. And proclaim the religion with courage, may Allah help you. I was glad when you said that you were mumin (believer). So help the Messenger of Allah in the cause of Allah. And announce .to the Quraish your decision, and tell them that Ahmad was never a sorcerer

It was the policy of Abu Talib to keep the Quraish in suspense about his true belief: Had he announced that he had accepted the religion of Muhammad, his position as a respected leader of the tribe would have been undermined. And then he could not extend his protection to the Holy Prophet. Thus, while always declaring his firm belief that Muhammad could not tell anything but the truth, exhorting his children and brothers to follow the religion of Muhammad, he assiduously refrained from declaring in so many words that he himself was a Muslim. Thus he maintained his position with .the hierarchy of Quraish and protected the Prophet through his influence

Even on his death-bed, while there was still a chance that he might recover, he very diplomatically announced his faith in such a way that the Quraish could not understand what he meant. When they asked him on which religion he was dying, he :replied

".On the religion of my forefathers"

As it has already

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been explained before, that 'Abdul-Muttalib and all his ancestors were followers of the Divine religion, one cannot but admire the prudence and wisdom of Abu Talib in .that difficult situation

During the last moments of his life, the Holy Prophet advised him to recite the Kalimah loudly (as is the custom of the Muslims). 'Abbas, who had not accepted Islam yet, saw the lips of Abu Talib moving. He put his ears near Abu Talib, and then said to the Holy :Prophet

"!O my nephew! Abu Talib is saying what you wanted him to say"

:Allamah Ibn Abil-Hadid, the Mu'tazilite, has truly said the following poetic lines'

,(If it were not for Abu Talib and his son ('Ali

.religion of Islam could not take any shape, nor could it find its feet

Thus, Abu Talib in Mecca gave shelter and protected

.him), and 'Ali in Medina rubbed shoulders with death)

.Abu Talib died at the age of ۸۵ in the middle of Shawwal or Dhul-Qa'dah, ۱۰ Bi'that

:Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a.s.) said

"The ancestors of the Holy Prophet will be in Paradise and 'Abdul-Muttalib will enter Paradise having upon him the light of the Prophets and the dignity of kings, and Abu Talib will be in the same group."

Khadijah

Hazrat Khadijah was respected so much that the Meccans called her Tahirah (the pure one). All the children of the Holy Prophet were born from Khadijah except Ibrahim who was born of Maria the Copt.

She was the first person to testify to the truth of the Holy Prophet. She spent all

her wealth in the cause of Islam. And she was a source of comfort and consolation to .the Holy Prophet

:The Holy Prophet said

Four women are the supreme-most amongst the women of Paradise: Maryam" mother of 'Isa (Jesus) (a.s.), Asiyah wife of Pharaoh, Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, and ".Fatimah hint Muhammad

:Ayishah said

I never envied any woman as much as I envied Khadijah. The Holy Prophet always" remembered her. Whenever any sheep or goat was slaughtered, the choicest parts were sent to Khadijah's relatives and friends. I used to say, 'It appears that Khadijah was the only woman in the world.' Hearing this, the Holy Prophet was very much '" .annoyed and said: 'Khadijah had many virtues, which others do not have

:She also said

Once the Holy Prophet remembered her and I said, 'How long will you go on" remembering a woman so old that she had no teeth in her mouth? Allah has given you a woman better than her (meaning herself).' The Holy Prophet was so angry that the hair of his head was raised. He said: 'By Allah, I do not have better than Khadijah. She believed in me when others were steeped into infidelity. She testified to my truth

when others rejected my claim. She helped me with her wealth when others deprived me. And Allah gave me children by her." 'Ayishah says that from then on she decided not to say any unkind word about Khadijah. (Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. ٣).

She was ۶۵ years old when she died, and she

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was buried at Hajun. Her grave was demolished in ۱۹۲۵ like those of 'AbdulMuttalib, .Abu Talib and others

Visit to Taif

After the death of Abu Talib and Khadijah , finding that the Meccans had turned a deaf ear to his preaching, the Prophet decided to go to Taif, perhaps its people would be more responsive. But a big disappointment was in store for him. Muhammad spent a month at Taif only to be scoffed and laughed at. When he persisted in his preaching, the people of Taif drove him out of their city pelting stones at him. In this desperate :situation he prayed to God thus

O Allah! I make my complaint unto You regarding the feebleness of my strength, the" insignificance of my devices, and my humiliation in the sight of people. O You, the Most Merciful One! You are the Lord of the oppressed, You are my Lord. To whom would You entrust my affairs? To a stranger who would scowl at me? Or to an enemy who would control me? If you are not displeased with me, then I do not care (about any hardship), but an ease bestowed by You will be more accommodating to me. I seek refuge in the light of Your countenance (by which all darkness is dispersed and all affairs of this world and the hereafter are kept straight) from pouncing of Your anger or the coming of Your wrath. I seek your pardon in order that you may be pleased with me. There is

"no power nor strength except in You

.Grief-stricken, the Prophet returned to Mecca

Islam Gradually Reaches Beyond Mecca

All these disappointments and persecutions notwithstanding, Islam was spreading in other tribes too, although very slowly and not on a grand scale. Its simplicity and rationality were such that it only needed to reach the ears of the people to stir their souls. For thirteen years, the Quraish did their very best to stifle the new religion, but their opposition itself provided the necessary publicity. Tribes from all corners of .Arabia flocked to Mecca at the time of the annual pilgrimage

Lest they should be influenced by the message of Mohammed, the Quraish used to post themselves outside the city and warn the pilgrims: "An infidel has been born in our city who dishonors our idols; he even speaks ill of Lat and Uzza; do not listen to him." People naturally got curious and wanted to know more about this man. A disciple of the Prophet, recalling his earlier days, stated: "When I was young, I used to hear from the people going to Mecca that a person claiming Prophethood had been born there." When the news spread, most people laughed and jeered at Mohammed, yet there were a few seekers of the truth who listened to his message and who were influenced by it. Hafiz ibn Hajar, in his book al-Isabah, mentions the names of several companions who had come from Yemen and other distant places and, after secretly accepting Islam, had gone back to work among

.their tribes. The clan of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari in Yemen accepted Islam in this manner

Tufail ibn 'Amr, of the tribe of Daws, was a poet of repute who could by his poetic fervor sway the feelings and attitudes of the Arabs. He had come into contact with the Prophet and was so enthralled by the marvelous diction of the Qur'an recited to him that he accepted Islam instantly. He was able to win some converts in his tribe, but in general the tribe did not listen to him. He came back to the Prophet and requested him to curse the Daws but the Prophet prayed thus: "O God! Guide the Daws and send .them to me (as Muslims)." Soon after, the entire tribe accepted Islam

Dhamad ibn Tha'labah was a chief of Azd and a friend of the Prophet in his early years. He came to Mecca and was told that Mohammed had gone mad. He ,approached the Prophet and said that he could cure him. The Prophet replied

All praise be to God; I praise Him and seek His forgiveness. If God were to guide" anyone, he cannot go astray, and if He leaves anyone to stray, nothing can guide him. I declare that there is no god but Allah. He is one and has no partner, and further (I ".declare) that Mohammed is His Servant and Messenger

It is almost impossible to reproduce the vibrating force and captivating charm of the Arabic text which so much impressed Dhamad that he accepted

.Islam immediately and through him his whole tribe submitted to it

Abu Dharr of the tribe of Ghifar was one of those who were disgusted with idol-worship. When:be heard about the Prophet, he went to Mecca and incidentally met 'Ali with whom he stayed for three days. 'Ali introduced him to the Prophet and Abu Dharr accepted Islam. The Prophet advised him to go back home, but in his zeal he publicly announced in the Ka'bah: "There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is His Prophet." He was given a sound thrashing by the Quraish and was rescued by 'Abbas. Returning to his tribe, he invited it to accept Islam. About half of his tribesmen, accepted Islam .and the rest followed suit when the Prophet migrated to Medina

As the Ghifars were on very friendly terms with the tribe of Aslam, the latter were .influenced by the former and also accepted Islam

Quite a number of persons had incidentally heard the Qur'an being recited and were captivated by it. Jubayr ibn Mut'im had come to Medina to pay ransom for the prisoners of war of Badr. He happened to hear the Prophet reciting the following :verses

Or were they created out of naught? Or are they the creators? Or did they create the (heavens and the Earth? Nay, but they have no certainty. (Qur'an, ۵۲:۳۵-۳۶

Jubayr stated that when he heard these verses, he felt that his heart was about to .soar

First Pledge of 'Aqabah

As the Meccans refused to listen to him, the Prophet used

to preach to strangers and pilgrims visiting the Ka'bah. As described above, the news that a Prophet had arisen was spreading. A deputation of about twenty Christians from Nazareth came to meet him and embraced Islam. Similarly, another group of six persons from Yathrib accepted Islam. The next year, at the time of the annual pilgrimage, twelve Yathribites came and undertook a pledge known as the First Pledge of 'Aqabah (Mountain-pass), so named because it was done in an out of the :way mountain-pass outside Mecca. The pledge was

; Not associate anything with God

; Neither steal nor commit adultery nor fornication

; Will not kill our children

; Will abstain from calumny and slander

. Obey the Prophet in everything, and we will be faithful to him in weal and sorrow

The period between the First and the Second Pledges was one of anxious waiting. The Meccans were sternly adamant, the people of Taif had rejected Muhammad, and the mission was making a slow progress. Yet hope had been engendered by its diffusion to the distant city of Yathrib. The conviction was very much there that the truth would :ultimately prevail. Describing this period, Muir says

Mahomet, thus holding his people at bay, waiting, in the still expectation of victory, to" outward appearance defenseless, and with his little band, as it were, in the lion's mouth, yet trusting in his Almighty's power whose messenger he believed himself to be, resolute and unmoved, presents a spectacle of sublimity paralleled only in

the sacred records by such scenes as that of the prophet of Israel, when he ".complained to his Master, 'I, even I only, am left

Ascension of the Prophet

It was at such a time that God Almighty, in His infinite Mercy and Benevolence, bestowed upon the Prophet the unique distinction of being lifted to the furthest limit of heavens and of being shown the gorgeous splendor of the heavens and the :universe

Glory to (Him) Who took His servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Furthest Mosque whose precincts We have blessed, in order that We might show (him some of Our signs, for He is the Hearer and the Seer. (Qur'an, ۱۷:۱

There has been a good deal of controversy over the question whether the Ascension (Mi'raj) was only a vision or an actual bodily journey. The majority of the traditionalists agree that it was a real physical journey, much like the bodily ascension of Jesus to .heaven and the descent of Adam to earth

The fact is that this controversy was created by Banu Umayyah whose interest in Islam was based not on faith but on politics and who did not like the idea of any miracle of the Holy Prophet gaining ground in the Muslims' minds. Their department of .forgery obliged them in this respect also

Two "traditions" from that department are repeatedly described by the Christians,

:the Ahmadis, and a group of the Sunnis; these are

Ayishah, wife of the Holy Prophet, is alleged to have' •

said that during the whole night of the Ascension, the body of the Holy Prophet was on .the bed

".Mu'awiyah said that The Mi'raj was a "true dream •

Now the fact is that the Mi'raj (whatever its interpretation) took place in Mecca one or three years before the Hijrah. Bibi 'Ayishah did not enter the house of the Holy Prophet till one year after Hijrah. How could she say that she did not miss the body of ?the Holy Prophet at that time

There is only one possible explanation: This "tradition" was forged by someone who did not know the sequence of Islamic history. Otherwise, he could not have attributed .this "tradition" to 'Ayishah

Mu'awiyah was such an enemy of the Holy Prophet that when ٨ years after the Hijrah, Mecca was conquered without bloodshed and Abu Sufyan (father of Mu'awiyah), seeing no alternative, accepted Islam, Mu'awiyah fled to Bahrain and wrote a nasty letter to his father condemning him for his acceptance of Islam. It was not till the ٩th year of Hijrah that he brought himself to profess Islam. And the Mi'raj took place ١٠ or ١٢ years before that time. How could he know what the facts of the Mi'raj were?! He does not mention his source of information, and the inference is that there was no .such source

If you want to witness how politics controlled the version of Islam professed by the

:Umayyads, read one more 'tradition' invented in their factory

The king on the throne of Damascus

is 'Abdul-Malik ibn Marwan. Iraq and Hijaz are in the hands of 'Abdullah ibn Zubayr. 'Abdul-Malik does not like the idea of the pilgrims of his domain being obliged to go to Mecca (which is in the enemy's hands); so, he wants to enhance the prestige of Baitul Maqdis, which lies within his domain and plans to establish "hajj" to Baitul Maqdis. As part of that plan, all previous declarations that the Mi'raj was a dream are forgotten, and a tradition is forged that the final destination of the journey of the Mi'raj was .Baitul Maqdis

Soon thereafter, 'Abdullah ibn Zubayr is defeated and Hijaz comes under Syrian control; otherwise, we would surely have seen two centers of hajj in the Muslim !world

The Second Pledge of 'Aqabah

On their return to Yathrib, the converts to the faith spread the doctrines of Islam and a large number of Yathribites became adherents to the faith. In the following year, seventy people from Yathrib, including the twelve who took the first pledge, came to the Prophet to accept Islam and to invite him to their city. They swore allegiance to him. This pledge is known as the Second Pledge of 'Aqabah. 'Abbas, uncle of the Holy Prophet, although not a Muslim yet, was present on that occasion and exhorted the .Yathribites to protect the Holy Prophet

A Plan to Assassinate the Prophet

When the Meccans learned that Islam had struck roots in Yathrib and was fast spreading there, their animosity knew no bounds. Their chiefs, such as Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab, Abu Sufyan, and

Utbah gathered at Dar-un-Nadwa and, after rejecting suggestions to imprison or' .banish Muhammad, they planned to assassinate him

And remember when the unbelievers plotted against you to imprison you, or to kill you, or to drive you out, they plotted and planned and Allah, too, planned. (Qur'an, (۸:۳۰

In order to escape the vendetta of Banu Hashim, it was decided that every clan should provide one man, and that they should collectively assault the Prophet as soon as he came out of his house. But God had apprised His Prophet of this plan well in advance and he informed 'Ali of it, ordering him to sleep in his (Prophet's) bed. The Holy Prophet covered 'Ali with his own green sheet. When 'Ali heard that his life was to be the ransom for the Holy Prophet's, he at once prostrated before Allah to thank Him for this unique honor. It was the first sajdah of "shukr" (a prostration of gratitude) in Islam. Thus, 'Ali slept soundly on the Holy Prophet's bed as the Prophet walked out of .the house under the infidels' very noses

Coming out of the house, he recited the first few verses of the Surat Ya-Sin and threw .a handful of dust over their heads. None of the enemies saw him going out

The Holy Prophet had also ordered 'Ali to return the things which people had .entrusted to him to their respective owners

The polytheists of the Quraishite clans all the time thought that it was the Prophet who was sleeping

.and were anxiously waiting to kill him

According to Usudul Ghabah of Ibn Athir Jazari, Ihya' ul 'Uloom (of Ghazali) and Tarikhul Khamis of Qadi Husain al Diyarbakri, it is learnt that when 'Ali slept in :Muhammad's bed, God said to Gabriel and Michael

I establish brotherhood between you two and increase the life of one of you over" that of the other. Having done so, I ask which of you is prepared to sacrifice his life for "?his brother

Both Gabriel and Michael heard this address from the Lord but each held his life dearer than the other's and was not prepared to help his brother by sacrificing his ,own life. God then addressed them again

Can you not be like 'Ali ibn Abi Talib? See, I created brotherhood between " Muhammad and 'Ali, and now 'Ali is sleeping in Muhammad's bed determined to sacrifice his own life for his brother. Now you both go to earth and guard 'Ali from the ".mischief of the enemies

Then the two nearest-to-God angels came down and took their positions near the :head and the feet of 'Ali. Gabriel said

Hail to thee! Hail to thee! Who can be like thee, O son of Abu Talib, so that the Lord is " "?proud of thee and exalts thy virtue before the angels

And so it happened. When the Prophet was on his way to Medina, God revealed to him :the following verse in praise of 'Ali

And amongst men there is one who sells his life seeking the pleasure of Allah. And

(Allah is most benevolent to His slaves. (Qur'an, ٢:٢٠٧

The Holy Prophet went to the mountain of Thawr accompanied by Abu Bakr and hid in .a cave near its summit. This place is about ٥ miles from Mecca

There are two versions as to how Abu Bakr came to accompany the Holy Prophet. One narrative says that the Holy Prophet himself went to the house of Abu Bakr and .told him to accompany him

The other narrative says that when the Holy Prophet went away, Abu Bakr came there and asked 'Ali as to where the Holy Prophet was. 'Ali told him that he had already left for Medina. Abu Bakr went out looking for the Holy Prophet. The night was dark; therefore, when he came nearer, the Holy Prophet thought that some infidel was pursuing him. He started going faster and faster, till his shoe-lace was broken and his toes were badly wounded. Then Abu Bakr called him. Recognizing his voice, the Prophet stopped. Abu Bakr caught up with him and asked permission to .accompany him. Thus, they went together till they reached Thawr

At dawn, the infidels entered the house. They were flabbergasted upon finding 'Ali in the bed instead of the Holy Prophet. At once they started looking for him, tracking him right up to the mouth of the cave. Still, they never thought of looking into the cave. ?Why

As soon as the fugitives entered the cave, a spider wove cobweb at the entrance and a pair of pigeons built

their nest at the mouth of the very cave in the darkness of the night and laid eggs at once. It was that cobweb and the nest with the eggs that made the blood-thirsty enemies believe that Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) could not be in that cave; otherwise, the cobweb would have been destroyed and the nest and the eggs broken! It was at this moment that they got so near to the cave that Abu Bakr started weeping, being afraid ,of the possible discovery. But the Prophet consoled him saying

.(Grieve not; surely Allah is with us (Qur'an, ۹:۴۰

They left Mecca on the first night of Rabi'-ul-Awwal, (corresponding to ۱۵ or ۱۶ July, ۶۲۲ C.E.) reaching the cave of Thawr before dawn and remaining therein up to ۴th of Rabi'-ul-Awwal. On the ۵th, they started their journey to Medina. 'Abdullah ibn Urayqit al-Daylami was hired to show them the way. Abu Bakr offered one of his she-camels to the Holy Prophet for the journey. The Holy Prophet accepted it on the condition that Abu Bakr accepted its price. Thus, Abu Bakr sold one she-camel to the Holy Prophet .for ۹۰۰ dirhams

Journeying by unfrequented routes, they safely reached Quba (۲ miles south of .Yathrib) on the ۸th of Rabi'-ul-Awwal

There, the Holy Prophet laid the foundation of the mosque of Quba which has been mentioned in the Qur'an as "the Mosque founded on piety." After a few days, 'Ali joined them there and they proceeded to Yathrib, entering it on Friday the ۱۶th of

Rabi' ul-Awwal with a group of followers who had come from Yathrib to welcome the .Prophet. This was the Hijrah from which dates the Islamic calendar, the Hijri year

Persecution Analyzed

The Prophet of Islam and his devoted band of followers had patiently endured untold hardship, tyranny and oppression for thirteen years and ultimately had to abandon their hearths and homes, sacrificing whatever worldly possessions they had. They had not wanted any worldly gains, nor had they aspired for any position of worldly eminence or share in the administration. The Prophet had unequivocally told the :Meccans

I desire neither riches nor eminence nor dominion. I am sent by God Who has" ordered me to announce glad tidings to you. I convey to you the words of my Lord. I admonish you. If you accept the message I bring you, God will be favorable to you both in this world and in the next. If you reject my admonition, I shall be patient and ".leave God to judge between you and me

The early Muslims were harassed and persecuted simply because they believed in God, the Lord of the universe, and worshipped Him without ascribing to Him any :partner or colleague. They had not exercised any compulsion, for the Qur'an had said

There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error; therefore, whoever disbelieves in the rebels (i.e. false deities) and believes in Allah, he indeed has laid hold of the strongest handle which shall not break off. ,(Qur'an

(۲:۲۵۶

The Qur'an only appealed to the inner consciousness of man, to his reason and intellect. Nevertheless, the new religion was in sharp contrast with the cults practiced by the Quraish, which ages of observance and belief had sanctified for them. The Prophet preached equality of man and stressed the point that in righteousness alone lay the superiority of one over the other. The Quraish saw in this leveling of distinctions the end of their authority and privileges as the guardians of the Ka'bah, of .their political and social hegemony, and of their vested interests at large

The new religion placed restraints upon the promiscuous and unbridled license indulged in social intercourse. It heralded the end of licentious ways, of sensual pleasure and drunken orgies to which the Quraish were, by and large, espoused. It imposed spiritual discipline in the form of prayers, fasting and continence and frowned upon avarice, greed, slander, falsehood, indecency and other vices with which society was permeated. In short, it meant the giving up of old ways and the .taking to a new life of austere piety and chastity

The opposition of the Meccans was, therefore, sharp and violent. They relentlessly persecuted the followers of the new faith and made life so difficult for them that ultimately the Prophet and his followers had to abandon their hearths and homes for more congenial surroundings. The Prophet did not even invoke the wrath of God on them. When once he was requested by Khabbab son of Arrat to

:curse the Quraish, the Holy Prophet pulled him up by saying

People have gone by who were sawn and torn to pieces in the cause of God, but they" did not desist from their duties. God will accomplish His plan till a rider will go from ".Sinai to Hadramaut fearing none except God

!How true was the prophecy

The Prophet at Medina

Living in contact with the Jews, the Aws and the Khazraj were not foreign to the idea of the unity of God. They had heard from the Jews that a Prophet was to come. Some of their people had come into contact with the Prophet at Mecca and had been deeply impressed by Him. The deputation they had sent to Mecca had returned entirely satisfied and had accepted Islam. The disciples who had preceded the Prophet were spreading the message of Islam throughout Yathrib. Unlike the Meccans, the Yathribites had no vested interest standing in the way of their accepting the new religion. Islam had already taken roots in Yathrib thus before the Prophet arrived there on the invitation of the people of Aws and Khazraj. No wonder they gave the .Prophet a tumultuous welcome at Yathrib

The name of the city was then changed to Madinat-un-Nabi, the City of the Prophet. Islam effaced the age-long enmity between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj.and they were given the honorific designation of "Ansar" (helpers or supporters). The emigrants, forty-five in number, were called "Muhajirun" (exiles). The construction of a mosque, Masjid-un-Nabi (mosque of the Prophet), was

now underway, and the Prophet worked at it like any other laborer. Soon, a simple, unostentatious mosque with walls of unbaked bricks, with trunks of palm trees as pillars, and a thatch of palm leaves was built with a few adjoining rooms of similar material. On the completion of these rooms, the Prophet, who meanwhile was living .with Abu Ayyub, moved into one of them

The doors of the houses of some of the companions opened into the mosque (Masjid-un-Nabi). The Prophet ordered the doors of all of them except that of 'Ali to be closed. The companions raised some objections against this order. The Prophet, thereupon, :stood up and addressed them. Having praised Allah, he said

In accordance with the decree of Allah, I ordered you to close the doors and 'Ali to" keep his open. Your wrangling is undesirable. Neither did I open nor close any door of ".my own accord. I only acted as I was ordered by Allah

The Muhajirun needed some meaningful relief. To ensure their economic security and also to establish brotherly ties between them and the Ansar, the Prophet joined each Muhajir with an Ansar in a tie of "Brotherhood" that became even more precious and enduring than the bond of blood relationship. The Ansar volunteered to share half and half with their contractual brothers everything they earned or possessed. It is to this :unification of interests that the Qur'an refers in the following passage

Surely those who believed and migrated and strived hard in the way

of Allah with their property and souls, and those who sheltered and helped them, (these are indeed friends (and protectors) of one another. (Qur'an, ۸:۷۲

The Muhajirun were anxious not to remain a burden on their brothers. Soon, many of them settled down to trade and do business. In the course of time, they were rehabilitated, and within a few years, they were no longer in need of any financial :support. It was then that the following verse was revealed

(And the possessors of relationships are nearer to each other. (Qur'an, ۸:۱۷۴

In Medina, Islam had at first to face serious difficulties. Danger threatened it from all sides, and it had to fight against great odds for mere survival. Some of the battles forced on it were inspired by political motives, others were the result of direct opposition to the new faith and the desperate efforts which its enemies exerted to put it down before it firmly established itself. Other difficulties were added by the predatory and warlike habits of the nomadic tribes hovering round the city and the insecurity and lawlessness prevailing in the country at large. It may be a good idea, .therefore, to analyze and understand the political conditions of Arabia at this time

Arabia's Prevailing Political Conditions

The Arabs belonged to one ethnic race, but history does not record that they were ever united as one nation. They were divided into tribes and clans, each having its own chief or chieftain. They, no doubt, spoke the same language, but each tribe

followed a different dialectal variation. Indeed, even religion was not a binding force. .Almost every house had its own god; tribes had their own supreme deities

In the south were the small principalities of Himyar, Awza and Aqyal. In the middle and northern Arabia lived the tribes of Bakr, Taghlib, Shaiban, Azd, Qudha'ah, Khandaf, Lakhm, Juzam, Banu Hanifa, Tay, Asad, Hawazin, Ghatfan, and Aws, Khazraj, Thaqif, Quraish and others; they were frequently engaged in intensive .warfare. Bakr and Taghlib had been fighting each other for forty years

Blood engagements had ruined many a tribe of Hadhramaut. Aws and Khazraj had exhausted themselves through a protracted war, and the Battle of Fijar between the Banu Qais and Quraish had not yet ended. If any member of a tribe was killed, the tribe considered itself duty bound to seek revenge not merely upon the murderer but also on the tribe to which he belonged. Since there was no effective machinery to settle such disputes, this invariably touched off furious wars, which lasted for .generations

Tribal might, dash and alacrity, were the only guarantee of a precarious security. The desert and the hills were the home of fierce nomadic tribes who lived largely on plunder and depredation, but trade was also a major source of livelihood for them. Only a few months of the year were regarded as sacred. It was only then that bloodshed was stopped in order to facilitate the performance of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca or to do trade at

Ukaz. But even this convention was at times relaxed to suit the convenience of individual tribes. Only the precincts of the Ka'bah were considered sacred and were :free from bloodshed. It is to this state of affairs that the Qur'an has drawn attention

Do they not see that we have made a sacred territory secure for them, while men are (carried off by force all around them? (Qur'an, ۲۹:۶۷

The conditions in the country were so insecure that even till ۵ A.H., the powerful tribe of Abdul-Qais of Bahrain could not think of going to Hijaz outside the sacred months. Even the caravans going to or returning from Syria were sometimes plundered in .open daylight

Muslims' pasturelands were at times raided. Although conditions had considerably improved by then, the route to Mecca from Medina was not altogether safe until the .fall of Mecca

While the country was so strife-ridden internally, dangers from outside were no less. The Roman and Persian empires had extended their domain to the fertile provinces of Yemen, Oman and Bahrain and had established their sovereignty over them. The Romans had occupied Syria. Ghassan and some other Arab tribes, who had embraced .Christianity, had been set up as the latter's feudatories

The Romans had expelled the Jews from Syria and Palestine in the second Century B.C. These Jews had migrated to Medina and its suburbs and built strong fortresses at Medina, Khaibar, Taima, Fadak and other places. Prospering themselves, the Jews were extremely jealous of prosperity in other races and

strongly resented rivalry in trade business. They believed themselves to be God's "chosen people" and their conduct was characterized by pride and arrogance .intensified by the feeling of being secure inside their formidable fortresses

It was during such times that the Prophet started his great Mission. For preparing the ground and the proper climate, the first step that he took was to unite the Ansar and .the Muhajirun

A Pact with the Jews

The Holy Prophet not only welded the Ansar and the Muhajirun into one Brotherhood, but he set himself to the task of establishing a stable society, a commonwealth based on equality of rights and on the concept of universal humanity. Granting equality of status and rights as well as full freedom of religion and of conscience to the Jews, he invited them to enter into a pact with the Muslims. He drew up a charter, which has :been reproduced by the historian Ibn Hisham thus

In the name of the Most Merciful and the Compassionate God. Granted by Mohammed, the Prophet, to the Believers, whether of Quraish or of Yathrib, and all individuals of whatever origin who have made common cause with them, all these .shall constitute one nation

Then, after regulating the payment of the diyah (blood money) by the various clans and fixing some wise rules regarding the private duties of Muslims among :themselves, the document proceeds thus

The state of peace and war shall be common to all Muslims; none among them shall have the right of concluding peace with, or declaring war

against, the enemies of his co-religionists. The Jews who enter into this covenant shall be protected from all insults and vexations; they shall have an equal right with our own people to our assistance and good offices. The Jews of the various branches of 'Awf, Najjar, Harith, Jashm, Tha'labah, Aws, and all others domiciled in Yathrib shall .form with the Muslims one composite nation

They shall practice their religion as freely as the Muslims. The clients and allies of the Jews shall enjoy the same security and freedom. The guilty shall be pursued and punished. The Jews shall join the Muslims in defending Yathrib (Medina) against all enemies. The interior of Yathrib shall be a sacred place for all those who accept this Charter. The clients and allies of the Muslims and of the Jews shall be as respected as the principals. All Muslims shall hold in abhorrence anyone found guilty of a crime, injustice, or disorder. None shall uphold the culpable, even if he may be his nearest in .kinship

Then, after some other provisions regarding the internal management of the State, :this extraordinary document concluded thus

All future disputes between those who accept this Charter shall be finally referred, .after God, to the Prophet

The Jews of Medina accepted this Pact. After some time, the neighboring Jewish tribes of Banu Nadhir and Banu Quraizah joined it, too. But, as later events proved, it was only expediency that had dictated this course of action to the Jews. There was no change of

heart on their part and they secretly nursed the same hostile feelings against the Aws and the Khazraj as before and viewed the growing confederation of the Muslims with grave concern and animosity. In the course of time, they started taunting and abusing the Muslims, frequently quarrelling with them and resorting to treachery and sedition. Some people of the Aws and the Khazraj who had become lukewarm converts assisted them: the Munafiqun (hypocrites). These were headed by 'Abdullah ibn Ubay who had his own designs to become the ruler of Medina and, together with the Jews, they became a constant source of danger to the newborn religion and to its .adherents

The Jews, who had business connections with the Quraish of Mecca, conspired with them to eradicate the infant religion before it assumed formidable proportions. As the head of the religion, and "a general in a time of almost continual warfare," Muhammad was the guardian of the lives and liberty of the people. The very existence of the nascent religion was in serious peril. Islam preaches the brotherhood of mankind; it insists upon toleration of all religions and creeds; it enjoins kindness and compassion, but it does not preach monasticism, nor does it permit its followers .to submit to the forces of disintegration

Being in league with the Jews and the Munafiqun, the Meccans started harassing the Muslims. Under the leadership of Karz ibn Jabir al-Fahri, they started raiding up to the very outskirts of Medina, destroying fruit-bearing trees and carrying away

flocks. News began pouring into Medina that the Meccans were allying with other tribes to launch a massive attack against the Muslims. Muhammad sent out small missions to these tribes to contract alliances and treaties. One of them entered into a :treaty with the Banu Zamra. The terms of the treaty were as follows

This is the document of Muhammad, Messenger of God, for Banu Zamra. Their lives and property are safe. If they are attacked by anyone, they will be assisted except when they themselves fight against the religion. In return, they will come to the help .of the Prophet when called upon by him

A similar pact was made with the Banu Madlaj at Dhul'Ashirah. The Quraish had sent a threatening letter to 'Abdullah ibn Ubay who was the chief of his tribe before the :arrival of the Prophet

You have given shelter to our man (Muhammad). You should either kill him or turn " him out of Medina or else we swear that we will attack you and, killing all the males, ".we will capture and enjoy your women

The attack was considered so imminent, and the small band of Muslims was in such peril, that the Prophet used to remain awake throughout the night. Al-Darmi and al-Hakim have recorded that: "When the Prophet and his companions came to Medina and the Ansars sheltered them, the Arabs decided to attack them. The Prophet's ".companions used to sleep holding to their weapons

Some Reconnoitering Parties

The Quraishites were extremely furious about Muhammad (s.a.w.) slipping away from

their hands, having made all preparations to kill him. The news that Islam was rapidly gaining hold in Medina did nothing to pacify their rage and enmity. Several times news reached Medina that they were planning to attack the Muslims. As a result, the Holy Prophet had to send out reconnoitering parties now and then to find out the designs .and movements of the Quraish and to watch the routes to prevent any sudden attack

Once, thirty Muslims (under the command of Hamza, the Holy Prophet's uncle) met a party of ٣٠٠ riders (under the command of Abu Jahl) at Saiful-Bahr. The Meccans were eager to massacre the small group; of thirty, but Majd ibn 'Amr al-Juhni (who had a covenant with both groups) prevailed upon both groups and convinced them to go .back to their respective places. Thus, a battle was averted

Some time later, a patrolling party of ٦٠ or ٨٠ Muslims, under the command of 'Ubaidah ibn Harith (a cousin of the Holy Prophet) reached Rabigh and found ٢٠٠ riders of Quraish under the command of 'Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl or Mukriz ibn Hafs. The Quraishites started the battle with their bows and arrows. Then, someone thought that the Muslims could not come with such a small force to face a group of warriors so superior in number unless they had a great army hidden somewhere. This idea .spread, and they fled away

A small party of twelve persons under the command of 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh (a cousin of the

Prophet) was dispatched to Nakhlah, a spot between Taif and Mecca, with sealed orders to be opened after two days' journey a precaution against espionage which :was rife. The letter, as quoted by al-Tabari on page ١٢٧٥ of his Tarikh, stated

Stay at Nakhlah; gather information about the designs of Quraish and" ".communicate

It was only incidentally that the party met some Meccan traders and that one of them, 'Amr ibn al-Hadhrami, was killed at the hands of 'Abdullah. History has not recorded what altercation ensued between the two parties and which provoked the other. Whatever the immediate cause might have been, 'Abdullah had acted beyond his instructions, and this incident aggravated the situation. Except for this isolated incident, in none of the numerous expeditions listed by Arab historians as saraya was there any skirmish or a question of looting and plundering. They were sent out either to make alliances with neighboring tribes, or they were reconnaissance patrols, for .news was reaching Medina that, the Meccans might strike any day

Battles

Badr: The First Battle in Islam

point

The Quraish had begun grand-scale preparations to attack Medina. The trade caravan which had gone to Syria that year headed by Abu Sufyan was extraordinarily equipped. Every Quraishite put all his savings in that caravan, and it was decided that whatever the profit accrued that year, it would not be given to the traders but would .be spent on arms, horses, and other items of war to fight the Muslims of Medina

This news did cause much anxiety in Medina. As Abu

Sufyan was returning from Syria, he feared that the Muslims might intercept his trade caravan. He sent a messenger well in advance to inform the leaders of the Quraish of his fears. Upon receiving the message, a well-equipped army of one thousand .Meccans marched towards Medina under the command of Abu Jahl

They had reached Badr (۲۰۰ miles from Mecca and ۸۰ miles from Medina) when news came that the trade caravan was passing just three miles on the seaside from the Quraishites' camp, and that it had not encountered any attack from the Muslims yet. But since the Meccans were so eager on giving battle to Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and his followers, they decided to proceed towards Medina anyway. After all, was not the objective of sending such a trade caravan this very battle?! So, why should they go back to Mecca when they had one thousand well-equipped warriors among them who .were sufficient to teach the Muslims a lesson? They camped at the stream of Badr

Now let us see what was happening in Medina. When news came that the trade caravan was coming from Syria (on the north side) and that the Meccan army was marching towards Medina (from the South), the Muslims thought that they would be .crushed between these two enemy groups

Now, there were two alternatives before the Muslims in Medina: to either save themselves from being overwhelmed by the Meccans with all their resources from the rich Syrian trade, or make another option (one which had the

least danger for the time being and which also promised a rich booty): fall upon the Quraishi caravan returning from Syria richly laden and led by Abu Sufyan with only ۴۰ not so well-armed men. From a worldly point of view, this latter course was the safest and the most lucrative, and many Muslims preferred it. The other alternative, which was actually adopted on the recommendation of the Prophet as guided by God, was to leave the booty alone and to march out boldly against the well-armed and well-equipped Quraishite army of ۱,۰۰۰ men coming from Mecca.

This situation is described in the following ayats of the Qur'an:

Just as your Lord caused you (O Prophet!) to go forth from your house with the truth, though a party of the believers were averse, they disputed with you about the truth after it had become clear, (and they went forth) as if they were being driven to death while they looked (at it). And when Allah promised you one of the two parties that it shall be yours, and you loved that the one not armed should be yours, and Allah desired to manifest the truth of what was true by His words and to cut off the root of the unbelievers. That He may manifest the truth of what was true and show the falsehood of what was false, even though the guilty ones disliked it. (Qur'an, ۸:۵-۸)

These verses clearly show that the Meccan army was already on its way long

before the Muslims came out of Medina to defend themselves. Also, they clearly show that although some Muslims desired to avoid the Meccan army and to attack the trade caravan, that idea was not accepted, and that the decided aim and objective of .their march was to fight the Meccan army which was already on its way

This clearly belies the vicious and mischievous propaganda of Western writers who claim that the Prophet had intended to attack the trade caravan of the Quraish and that the Quraish had come out only to protect their caravan. The verses of the Qur'an are the only contemporary record of the events of Badr. If there is any writing by .anyone, which goes against this authentic narrative, it must be thrown out of window

You may wonder why the enemies of Islam labor so much to present this battle of Badr as one in which the Quraishites (poor souls!) were aiming just to protect their trade caravan. The reason is this: It was the first battle between the Quraishites and the Muslims, and if the responsibility of this first battle is laid on the heads of the Muslims, then all subsequent battles could be portrayed as being the continuation of this battle and, thus, the Holy Prophet could be presented as a warrior prophet who !by his plundering designs compelled the "peace-loving" Meccans to fight

Anyhow, let us go back to our narrative. The Meccan army was in control of the stream of Badr, and the ground

of their campsite was of firm clay. Contrarily, the Muslims were far from the stream and thus experienced difficulty in finding water. To make the matters worse, many Muslims had nocturnal discharge while asleep and became "unclean" (najis). And the ground under them was sandy which was likely to prevent fast running during the .battle

God helped them by sending rain which provided them with water enough for their needs and made the sandy ground firm for them, while the firm clay of the Meccans' .side became muddy, making their stand and maneuvers difficult

:Referring to this, Allah says in the Qur'an

Remember) when He caused drowsiness to fall on you as a security from Him and) sent down upon you water from the cloud so that He might thereby purify you and take away from you the uncleanness of Satan, so that He might fortes your hearts (and keep (your) footsteps thereby firm. (Qur'an, ۸:۱۱

In this background, look at the insinuation of some Western "scholars" who have written that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had taken control of the stream of Badr and by refusing water to Meccans, reduced them to defeat! Anyhow, the facts of the actual :battle are, in short, as follows

With an ill-equipped body of three hundred and thirteen persons, having among them only two horses and seventy camels, the Prophet proceeded to Badr, about eighty miles from Medina, to meet the Meccan army. The forces met on the ۱۷th of the month of Ramadhan, ۲ A.H. (۶۲۴

A.D.). After individual combats according to the custom of the Arabs, between Hamza, 'Ali and Ubaidah (all Hashimites) on the side of the Muslims and Utbah, Shaibah and Walid ibn 'Utbah (all Umayyads) from the Meccan ranks, a pitched battle ensued. The stakes were high. Both forces fought valiantly but the Muslims were animated by holy zeal. In the thick of the battle, the Prophet prayed to God, earnestly beseeching Him thus: "O Lord, forget not Thy promise of assistance! O Lord! If this little band were to ".perish, there will be none to offer worship unto Thee

:Allah describes it in the following verses

Recall) when you sought aid from your Lord, so He answered you: I will assist you) with a thousand angels following one another. And Allah only gave it as a good news and so that your hearts might thereby be at ease, and victory is only from Allah; (surely Allah is Mighty, Wise. (Qur'an, ٨:٩-١٠

The Muslims got the upper hand. The Meccans were driven back, leaving seventy dead, including a number of their notable chiefs. Out of ٧٠, thirty-five were killed by 'Ali ibn Abi Talib alone. It was his first war. Seventy others were taken prisoners. The .Muslim force had lost fourteen men

The prisoners were treated with exceptional kindness. Even the hostile critic Muir :says

In pursuance of Mahomet's commands the citizens of Medina and such of the" refugees as possessed houses received the prisoners and treated them with much consideration. 'Blessings be on the men

of Medina', said one of these prisoners in later days, 'they made us ride while they themselves walked; they gave us wheaten bread to eat when there was little of it, ".'contenting themselves with dates

The more affluent prisoners paid ransom and were set free. The others were asked to teach ten persons each to read and write and this teaching was to count as their ransom. After all, in these times of progress and enlightenment, with all the charters and agreements on the treatment of prisoners of war, history does not record another instance even remotely as generous and as humane as the Muslims' treatment of the prisoners taken in their very first encounter fourteen hundred years .ago

Features and Consequences of the Battle

The battle of Badr was remarkable in more ways than one. It demonstrated the great devotion of the disciples to the cause and their complete faith in the Prophet and his mission. Ranged before them in the Mencan ranks were many of their close relatives, their own sons, fathers, or uncles. Thus, the Prophet's uncle 'Abbas, 'All's brother 'Aqil, Abu Bakr's son, Hudhaifa's father and 'Umar's maternal uncle, to name a few, figured in the Meccan army. Yet the disciples never faltered. Personal feelings and sentiments were subordinated to the supreme cause. Such was the material from which Islam arose. The battle also proved that mere numerical superiority and matching valor are of no avail if the cause is not righteous. God helps those who make sacrifices in His .cause

The battle of

Badr had far-reaching consequences. Till then, the Muslims were a harassed band avoiding any major conflict. This victory gave them confidence in their physical power. They could now meet force with force. They were soon recognized as a power to be .reckoned with and smaller tribes were cautioned against joining forces against them

This victory dealt a severe blow to the prestige of the Quraish. A number of their chiefs, such as Abu Jahl, 'Utbah, Shaibah, Zam'ah, 'Aas ibn Hisham, and Umayyah ibn Khalaf had been killed and, consequently, Abu Sufyan became their undisputed chieftain. 'Abdullah ibn Ubay and his oscillating followers professed Islam, though in name only, and as munafiqun (hypocrites), they were always a source of danger. The Jews of Medina and its vicinity were alarmed at the new power that had emerged. Their enmity towards the Muslims, however, did not abate, and a Jewish tribe, Banu Qinaqa', had to be punished not long after Badr as will be discussed later. The ignominy of the defeat made the Meccans more bitter and furious and the cry of ."Revenge!" was on all lips

(.Ghazwat-us-Sawiq (۲ A.H

Abu Sufyan had sworn vengeance. He took a vow that he would not touch his wives nor comb his hair till he had avenged that defeat. In order to fulfill this vow and to show that all was not lost to the Meccans, he rode upon Medina with two hundred horsemen. Sallam ibn Mashkam, Chief of the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadhir, treated them to a

feast and divulged the weak points of Medina's fortifications. On the next day, Abu Sufyan raided a Medina pasture, killing an Ansar named Sa'ad ibn 'Amr and burning a number of houses. When this news reached the Prophet, he hotly pursued the raiders who fled, abandoning their rations. This gave the raid its name, "the battle of meal ".bags, sawiq

On the ۱۵th of Rajab of the same year, i.e. ۲ A.H., Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet, was married to 'All. All that 'All could offer by way of mater (dower) was his coat of mail, and all that the Prophet could give to his daughter were an ordinary cot, a mattress stuffed with palm leaves, a water bag, two grinding stones, and two earthen pitchers. Yet some writers insinuate that the Prophet and his party were ambushing and plundering trade caravans! If these writers, who profess to make an unbiased study, are to be believed, what had happened to the booty and the riches?! What is most dangerous about such -"historians" is that they dutifully cite a mass of historical data and in the same breath utter some falsehoods so that those lies may also pass .on as historically true

Ghazwah Ghatfan

In ۳ A.H., tribes of Bani Tha'labah and Bani Mihrab sent a force of five hundred and forty horsemen under the command of Da'thur to raid Medina. They gave up the idea when the Prophet marched with his companions out of Medina to meet this raiding ,party. Da'thur, however

got an opportunity to launch a surprise attack on the Prophet who was resting-alone under a tree. "O Muhammad," cried he with a drawn sword in his hand, "who is there now to save thee?!" "Allah", replied the Prophet. This dauntless composure and complete faith in God awed the wild bedouin whose sword now fell from his hand... Seizing it, the Prophet asked in turn, "Who is there now to save thee, O Da'thur?" "Alas, none," replied the bedouin. "Then learn from me to be merciful." So saying, the Prophet returned the sword to him. Da'thur was so impressed that he asked the Prophet for forgiveness and later on embraced Islam.

The Battle of Uhud

point

Ghazwat-us-Sawiq was only a prelude to the big battle that was to follow. The chagrin and fury of the Quraish at their defeat at Badr knew no bounds. Their whole energy was aroused and they commenced preparations for another attack on the Muslims. The tribes of Tihamah and Kinanah joined them. Their united forces numbered three thousand well equipped soldiers under the command of Abu Sufyan.

This army marched towards Medina and occupied a vantage position near the hills of Uhud, a short distance of three miles from Medina. Muhammad (s.a.w.) marched out with only a thousand men. On the way, 'Abdullah ibn Ubay with three hundred of his followers, the munafiqun, deserted the believers, and the Prophet was left with only seven hundred men. Only a hundred of them had coats of mail, and between them they had

only two horses. Their zeal was, however, so great that when some boys, who were considered too young to participate in the battle, were asked to go back, they departed very reluctantly and two of them, Raft' ibn Khadij and Samrah, managed to .remain with the army anyway

The Prophet took up his position below the hill. The army was arrayed in fighting formations and fifty archers were posted, under the command of 'Abdullah ibn Jubayr, at a pass between the hills to guard the army from any attack from the rear. They had strict orders not to leave their post, whatever the outcome of the battle might be. The standard was in the hands of Mus'ab ibn'Umayr. Zubayr was in command of the mailed section and Hamza in command of the rest. On the side of the Meccans, Talhah held the standard and the various regiments were under the charge of Khalid ibn al-Walid, 'Ikrimah ibn Abu jahl, Safwan ibn Umayyah and 'Abdullah ibn Umayyah. Talhah challenged the Muslims to individual combat. The challenge was accepted by 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and very soon Talhah's dead body lay on the ground. The standard was taken by his brother 'Uthman who was slashed by Hamza. A general engagement then started. 'Ali, Hamza and Abu Dajjanah gave heroic accounts of their .valor

An Abyssinian slave, Wahshi, had been commissioned by Hind, wife of Abu Sufyan, to kill either Muhammad (s.a.w.), 'Ali, or Hamza (in order to avenge the death of her father 'Utbah

ibn Rabi'ah, her brother al-Walid as well as that of Hanzalah son of Abu Sufyan at Badr at their hands). He singled Hamza out and threw a spear at him, which pierced .his abdomen and killed him

On the Meccan side, one standard-bearer after another met his end at the hands of 'Ali. The Meccans were losing heart till one of their women, 'Umrah daughter of 'Alqamah, took up the standard. The Meccans again rallied behind her but the Muslims crushed them. The Meccans, having paid a heavy toll, fell back in disarray and the Muslims started gathering the booty. Thinking that the battle battle was over, most of the archers who were guarding the passage in the hill left their posts lured by the .spoils even against the orders of their leader'Abdullah ibn Jubayr

Khalid ibn al-Walid was fleeing when he saw such an opportunity and, gathering a group and killing the few remaining defenders of the pass, launched a furious attack from the rear. The Muslims were taken so much by surprise that they did not know what to do. In the general melee their ranks became disorganized. The retreating .Meccan forces rallied again and launched a fresh onslaught from the front

The Muslim standard-bearer, Mu'sab ibn 'Umayr, who bore a great facial resemblance to the Prophet, was killed. Up went the cry that the Prophet had been killed. This threw the Muslims into further confusion and utter dismay. Even many of their famous personalities lost heart. 'Umar threw

away his sword saying there was no use fighting since the Prophet was no more. He fled towards the mountain and, in his own words, he was jumping from one boulder to another like mountain goats. Abu Bala and 'Uthman also fled, the latter returning to .Medina after three days

On the other hand, many valiant soldiers, renouncing all discretion, entered the thick of the Meccan ranks determined to fight to the end. This went on till Ka'ab ibn Malik saw the Prophet and shouted at the top of his voice that the Prophet was still alive. The spirit of the Muslims revived, but the Prophet now became the chief target of the Meccan forces. 'Abdullah ibn Qama'a advanced towards the Prophet and struck a sword on his head with such force that two links of his helmet penetrated the .Prophet's face

Utbah ibn Abi Waqqas threw a stone at the Prophet, further injuring his face and dislodging his two upper teeth. The Prophet now had fallen in a pit where 'Ali ibn Abi Talib found him and protected him against the continuous furious onslaughts of the Meccans. When the Prophet saw this sacrificing spirit of 'Ali, he asked him as to why did he too not flee like the others. 'Ali replied: "Should I become kafir after having "?accepted Islam

When 'Ali's sword broke down, the Holy Prophet gave him his own sword Dhul-Fiqar. It was then that a voice was heard from above saying, "There is no sword except .Dhul-Fiqar

".There is no hero except Ali

At the same time, Jibril told the Holy Prophet that it was the height of loyalty and bravery which 'Ali was demonstrating towards the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet said: "Why not? 'Ali is from me and I am from 'Ali." Jibril said: "And I am from you ".both

Later, some Muslims, like Sad, Zubayr, Talhah, Abu Dajjanah and Ziyad, gathered .round the Holy Prophet

Faithful companions, including the brave lady Ummu 'Ammarah, prevented others from getting too close to the Prophet. With their bodies did they shield him against the rain of arrows. Standing in such a great peril, the Prophet cried to God: "O God! Forgive my people, for they know not!" There was no rancor, no bitterness, and no ill-.will in his heart against his mortal enemies even in such a precarious situation

An overwhelming compassion for the people and a burning desire to lead them to the right path actuated all his deeds and sayings. Then some other Muslims arrived where the Prophet was being defended at fearful odds by the small band of his companions. After some furious fighting, they managed to take the Prophet to the security of a .cave in the heights of Uhud

Meanwhile, the word had reached Medina that the Prophet was killed. The Prophet's daughter, Fatimah al-Zahra, surrounded by a group of Muslim women, hurried to Uhud. To her great relief, Fatimah found her father alive but his forehead and face were covered with his own blood. 'Ali

.brought water in his shield and Fatimah cleansed and dressed the wounds

The Meccan forces had turned the tables but they were too exhausted to drive their advantage home either by attacking Medina or by driving the Muslims from the heights of the hill. They satiated their desire for vengeance by committing ghastly brutalities upon the slain and the injured, cutting off their ears and noses and mutilating their bodies. The brave Hamza was amongst the slain. Hind cut off his ears and nose and took out his heart and liver. She tried to chew the liver but Allah made it so hard that she could not do so... She had to throw it out. The horrible scene was so .revolting that the Prophet forbade forever the practice of mutilation

In this battle, seventy Muslims were martyred and an equal number of them were wounded. 'Ali received sixteen serious sword wounds. The Meccans lost ۳۰ (or ۲۲) .warriors twelve of whom at the hands of 'Ali

With victory almost within their grasp, the Muslims had suffered a heavy blow. They were shaken in body and in spirit. But the Prophet preached to them fortitude and endurance. For those who laid their lives in the way of Allah, the following glad tiding :had been revealed

And reckon not those who are killed in Allah's way as dead; nay, they are alive (and) (are sustained by their Lord. (Qur'an, ۳:۱۶۹

While retreating to Mecca, Abu Sufyan had bribed a traveler going towards Medina to inform the

Holy Prophet that the Meccans were again assembling a great force to attack Medina. Hearing the news, 'Ali said: "Allah is sufficient for us and most excellent Protector is ".He

The Holy Prophet went out at once, taking with him only those seventy warriors who were wounded in Uhud, to pursue the Meccan forces. He stayed for three days at a place called Hamra'ul-Asad but did not find any trace of the Meccans, so he returned. :The Qur'an mentions this episode in the following ayat

Those who responded to the call of Allah and the Messenger even after the wound had afflicted them, those among them who do good and guard (themselves against evil) shall have a great reward. Those to whom the people said: Surely men have gathered against you; therefore, fear them, but this only increased their faith, and they said: Allah is sufficient for us and most excellent Protector is He. So they returned with favor from Allah and (His) grace; no evil touched them, and they followed the (pleasure of Allah, and Allah is the Lord of mighty grace. (Qur'an, ۳:۱۷۲-۱۷۴

The defeat at Uhud did, indeed, create serious difficulties for the Muslims. It emboldened the nomadic tribes on the one hand to make forays upon Medina and, on the other hand, encouraged the Jews of Medina to foment further trouble. Yet it was not disastrous for the Muslims. While a defeat at Badr, when the Muslims were yet a handful would have wiped them out and spelt

the death knell of the Prophetic mission, a defeat here and there after Islam had gained strength only put the Muslims in the testing crucible so that they might emerge more determined and cured of any complacency and vanity to which they might have .otherwise fallen prey

The Meccans were determined to annihilate the Muslims. This objective they could not achieve. Their infantry had suffered such losses that they could not even drive home the advantage they gained in the last stages of the battle. They had thought they were the masters of all western Arabia, but they could do nothing more than hold their own against the Muslims. It is not surprising, therefore, that they marched back .to Mecca frustrated and discouraged

The Meccans realized that on their own they could not crush the Islamic movement. They ,now started instigating other tribes to make common causewith them. Most of the tribes were already inimical to Islam. They practiced idolatry while Islam forbade it and enjoined worship of one God. Raiding and plundering were the general means of their livelihood while Islam dictated an orderly society, forbidding oppression, exploitation, and foul play. It enjoined its followers to seek honest means of livelihood. The influence of the Quraish extended far and wide and all the tribes came into contact with them at the time of the annual pilgrimage. The Jews were also constantly instigating the tribes against the Muslims. The victory of the Muslims over the Quraish at Badr had overawed nomadic tribes

but their defeat at Uhud emboldened them to show their hands and a number of .skirmishes followed

Sariyah Abu Salamah

The first of these forays was Sariyah Abu Salamah. Talhah and Khalid instigated their tribe, Banu Asad, to attack Medina on the first of Muharram of ۴ A.H. The Prophet dispatched a force of one hundred and fifty men to intercept them. The invaders .dispersed on seeing this force and there was no engagement

Sariyah Ibn Anis

In the same month (۴ A.H.), Sufyan ibn Khalid of the Banu Lahyan prepared to attack Medina. The Prophet sent 'Abdullah ibn Anis with a force to meet him. 'Abdullah was killed. Hostile critics say that the Prophet got the chiefs of some tribes killed to overawe them. They quote Arab historians like al-Waqidi, Ibn Hisham and Ibn al-Athir in recounting the names of the persons killed, but they very conveniently omit the details and circumstances given by the same authorities regarding the raids they were committing or the preparations they were making to assault Medina. The Prophet could not ignore the danger that surrounded the Muslims; he would not allow .them to be exterminated

Treachery at Bir Ma'unah

The tribes were not only repeatedly raiding Medina but also employing treacherous methods to deplete the Muslim's ranks and resources. In Safar of ۴ A.H., Abu Bara' of Banu Kalb approached the Prophet to lend the services of his companions to preach to his tribe and to instruct them in the way of Islam. Seventy pious disciples were sent with him but, with the

exception of one person, namely Abr ibn Umayyah, the entire party was put to death .when it reached Bi'r Ma'unah

The Foul play at Raji

Likewise, the tribes of Adh'al and Quarah sent a deputation to the Prophet to inform him that they had accepted Islam and needed some instructors. He sent ten disciples with them. On reaching Raji', the envoys instigated Banu Lahyan to kill seven of the disciples and to capture the rest. The captives were sold at Mecca and those who purchased them put them to death. One of the captives was Zaid. A crowd, including Abu Sufyan, assembled to see him being slaughtered. Abu Sufyan inquired of him if he would not have considered himself lucky had Muhammad been there to be slaughtered in his place. The devoted attachment of Zaid to the Prophet can be gauged from the reply he gave. He said: "By God, I do not value my life even this much that in its place a thorn may pierce the sole of the Prophet's foot." He was thereupon .slashed to death

The Attitude of the Jews

For a long time, the Jews were masters of Medina. The tribes of Aws and money lending at exorbitant rates of interest was Khazraj (the Ansar) had settled there later. Gradually, these tribes gathered strength and equaled the Jews in power and prestige. The internecine war of the Bu'ath, however, weakened them, and the Jews again assumed ascendancy. The Jews were a prosperous people and one of their main occupations. With the deterioration in the economic

situation of the tribes of Aws and Khazraj, many of them became heavily in debt to .the Jews

The position of authority and eminence, which their material superiority and strength gave to the Jews, received a big setback when Islam started spreading in Medina. They therefore, viewed the expansion of Islam with great disfavor and apprehension. Expediency had actuated them into entering into a pact with the Muslims, but soon they began plotting against Islam. They would distort the words and verses of the Qur'an and mock and jeer at the Muslims. Nevertheless, the Prophet was bidden to :bear it patiently

And you shall certainly hear from those who have been given the Book before you .... and from those who are polytheists much annoying talk, and if you are patient and guard (yourself against evil), surely this is one of the matters of great resolve. (Qur'an, (۳:۱۸۶

The Prophet tried his best to maintain friendly ties with the Jews. The Qur'an stressed the fundamental unity between the two religions and asked the Jews to come to :terms with the Muslims

Say: O people of the Book! Come to a word common between us and you: That we shall not worship any but Allah and (that) we shall associate nothing with Him, and (that) some of us shall not take others for lords besides Allah, but if they turn back, (then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims. (Qur'an, ۳:۶۴

,Neither kindness nor fair dealing on the part of the Prophet could

however, conciliate the Jews. They tried to revive the rift between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj. Some Jews would accept Islam one day and renounce it the next in .order to show that there was nothing (important) in Islam

And a party of the people of the Book say: Profess faith in that which has been revealed to those who believe in the first part of the day and disbelieve therein at the (end of it, perhaps they will go back on their religion. (Qur'an, ٣:٧٢

They conspired with the munafiqun and sent emissaries to the enemies of Islam. Apprehension and envy at the growing power of the Muslims following their victory at Badr rankled in their hearts, and they redoubled their efforts to exterminate the new religion. The Quraish were further instigating them to do so, sending a threatening :epistle to them

You possess arms and fortresses. You should fight our enemy (Muhammad); " otherwise, we will attack you and nothing will prevent us from grabbing the arms of ".your women

Ka'ab ibn Ashraf, a Jewish chieftain of Banu Nadhir, was a poet of considerable fame. Like so many others, he was bitterly hostile to Islam. With his fiery poems, he began to incite the people to rise up against the Muslims. After the battle of Badr, he composed a number of eulogies mourning the Meccan chiefs slain in the battle. He used to recite them at every gathering. He contacted Abu Sufyan with a view to making a combined effort to

.wipe out the Muslims

He openly recited a number of poems derogatory to the Prophet. As poetry had a high place in the life of the Arabs and could deepen influence and sway feelings, Ka'ab ibn Ashraf had become not only a nuisance but a serious menace. We have it on the authority of al-Ya'qubi and Hafiz Ibn Hajar that Ka'ab plotted to kill the Prophet. When the Prophet knew this plot, he consulted his companions and it was decided that Ka'ab should be silenced forever. Muhammad ibn Maslamah undertook to carry out the job .and, on getting an opportunity, he sent Ka'ab ibn Ashraf to hell

The Banu Qinaqa', the most powerful Jewish tribe, were the first to resile from the alliance with the Muslims. Says Ibn Sa'd, "The Jews attempted sedition during the ".battle of Badr and were envious of the Muslims, retracting from their pact with them

As mentioned earlier, an incident in ۲ A.H. led to a flare-up. A veiled Muslim lady had gone to the shop of a Jew. She was pestered and her clothes thrown up. A Muslim standing nearby was unable to tolerate this indecent behavior, so he killed the Jew. The Jews, thereupon, killed the Muslim. The Prophet remonstrated with them but they defiantly replied that they were not (as weak as) Quraish (who were defeated in Badr) .and would show him what battle was

Within the security of their fortress, they started making preparations for war. The Muslims besieged the fortress for fifteen

days and the Jews had to sue for peace, promising that they would accept the Prophet's decision. The Prophet banished them, allowing them to take all their movable possessions to Syria. Some European critics see only the immediate cause, that is, the indecent behavior with the Muslim lady and, ascribing it to boyish prank, they try to minimize it. In their view, therefore, the punishment was too harsh, but they fail to take notice of the constant efforts of the Jews to undermine the Islamic movement. It was not one incident but a series of events that had brought on the final .clash

(.Expulsion of the Bann Nadhir (Rabi ۱, ۴ A.H

The banishment of the Banu Qinaqa' enraged its sister tribe, the Banu Nadhir. Encouraged by the Meccans and by 'Abdullah ibn Ubay, they plotted to kill the Prophet. Once the Holy Prophet, together with some companions, were there to seek their help in arranging the payment of blood-money of two persons from the tribe of 'Amir. The Jews asked the Holy Prophet to come inside their fortress, but the Holy Prophet did not like the idea. Instead, he sat outside the wall of the fortress. They sent one man to climb the wall from inside the fortress and to kill the Holy Prophet by .throwing a big boulder on his head

The Holy Prophet, through divine revelation, came to know of this treacherous .scheme in nick of time and immediately left the place

Then he sent Banu Nadhir an ultimatum with Muhammad ibn Maslamah that, since they had broken

their treaty, they should leave Medina in ten days. They wanted to migrate when 'Abdullah ibn Ubay encouraged them not to leave Medina, promising them help with ٢٠٠٠ warriors. The Jews then refused to leave Medina. The following ayats refer to this :promise of help

Have you not seen those who have become hypocrites? They say to those of their brethren who disbelieve from among the people of the Book: If you are driven forth, we shall certainly go forth with you, and we will never obey anyone concerning you, and if you are fought, we will certainly help you, and Allah bears witness that they are most surely liars. Certainly, if these are driven forth, they will not go forth with them, and if they are fought, they will not help them, and even if they help there, they will (certainly turn (their) backs, then they shall not be helped. (Qur'an, ٥٩: ١١-١٢

Their fortress was besieged, and 'Abdullah ibn Ubay did nothing to help them. After ١٥ days, they agreed to leave Medina. They were allowed to take away-`all their .movables, which they could take except weapons of war

They did not like the idea of leaving their houses to be occupied by the Muslims, so they demolished them. The Qur'an refers to the various aspects of this expulsion in Sura ٥٩. For example, their migration and the destructing of their houses at their own :hands is referred to in this ayat

He it is who caused those who disbelieved

from among the people of the Book to go forth from their homes at the first banishment, you did not think that they would go forth, while they were certain that their fortresses would defend them against Allah, but Allah came to them from where they did not expect and cast terror into their hearts: they demolished their houses with their own hands and the hands of the believers; therefore, take a lesson, O you (who have eyes! (Qur'an, ٥٩:٢

They passed through Medina's market singing and beating drums to show that they were not disheartened by that banishment and that they would soon avenge this .defeat. Some of them went to Syria while others settled with the Jews of Khaybar

Since there was no war, according to the command of Allah (see Sura ٥٩, verses ۶ to ١٠), all the wealth left by them became the personal property of the Holy Prophet who, having consulted with the Ansar, distributed all movable property to poor Muhajirun and three poor companions from the Ansar: Sahl ibn Hanif, Abu Dajjanah and Zaid. He gave the immovable property to 'All ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) who made it waqf (endowment) .(.for the descendants of Fatimah (s.a

The ٥٩th Chapter of the Qur'an (The Banishment) describes various aspects of Banu .Nadhir' s expulsion

The Battle of Khandaq (Moat) or Ahzab

Upon settling down at Khaybar, the Banu Nadhir decided to seek revenge against the Muslims. They contacted the Meccans, and ٢٠ leaders from the Jews and ٥٠ from the Quraish made covenant

in the Ka'bah that so long as they lived, they would fight Muhammad. Then the Jews and the Quraish contacted their allies and sent emissaries to a number of tribes. Banu Ghatfan, Banu Asad, Banu Aslam, Banu Ashja', Banu Kinanah and Banu Fizarah readily responded and the coalition contributed ten thousand soldiers who marched upon .Medina under the command of Abu Sufyan

When news of these preparations reached Medina, the Holy Prophet consulted his companions. Salman al-Farsi advised to dig a moat on the unprotected side of .Medina

Muslims were divided into parties of ١٠, and each party was allotted ١٠ yards to dig. The Holy Prophet himself participated in this task. The khandaq (moat) was completed in nick of time: just ٣ days before the host of the enemies reached Medina. The .Muslims could muster only three thousand men to face this huge army

Huyaiy ibn Akhtab, head of Banu Nadhir, met secretly with Ka'b ibn Asad, head of Banu Quraizah, a Jewish tribe still in Medina. Banu Quraizah, on his instigation, tore .down the treaty, which they had concluded with the Muslims

This treachery and danger from inside Medina, when Muslims were surrounded by the combined armies of pagans and Jews of all of Arabia on the outside, had a telling effect on the Muslims. As a meager safeguard, Salimah ibn Aslam was deputed with only two hundred men to guard the city from any attack by Banu Quraizah. The enemy was astonished to see the moat because it was a new

thing for the Arabs. They camped on the outside for ٢٧ (or ٢۴) days. Their number increased day by day, and many Muslims were extremely terrified, as the Qur'an gives us the picture. Surah al-Ahzab describes various aspects of this siege. For :example, see the following verses

When they came upon you from above you and from below you, and when the eyes turned dull, and the hearts rose up to the throats, you began to think diverse thoughts about Allah. There, the believers were tried, and they were shaken a tremendous (shaking. (Qur'an, ٣٣:١٠-١١

At that time, many hypocrites, and even some Muslims, asked permission to leave the :rank of the Muslims and to return to their homes

And when a party of them said: O people of Yathrib! There is no place for you to stand, and a party of them asked permission of the Prophet saying: Verily our houses are (exposed, and they were not exposed; they only desired to fee away. (Qur'an, ٣٣:١٣

The bulk of the army, however, steadfastly bore up the hardship of inclement weather and rapidly depleting provisions. The coalition's army hurled arrows and .stones at the Muslims

Finally, a few of the Quraish's more valiant warriors, 'Amr ibn 'Abdwadd, Nawfil ibn 'Abdullah ibn Mughirah, Dhirar ibn Khattab, Hubairah ibn Abi Wahab, 'Ikrimah ibn Abi .Jahl and Mirdas al-Fahri, succeeded in crossing the moat

Amr called for battle; nobody responded; he was considered equal to one thousand' warriors. History accounts state that all the Muslims were as

.though birds were sitting on their heads: they were too afraid to raise their heads

Three times did the Holy Prophet exhort the Muslims to give battle to Amr. Three times it was only 'Ali who stood up. In the third time, the Holy Prophet allowed 'Ali to :go. When 'Ali was going to the battlefield, the Holy Prophet said

".The whole faith is going to fight the whole infidelity"

Ali invited 'Amr to accept Islam, or to return to Mecca, or to come down from his' horse since 'Ali had no horse and was on foot. 'Amr alighted from his horse and a fierce battle ensued. For a while, so much dust covered both warriors that nobody knew what was going on. Once 'Amr succeeded in inflicting a serious cut on 'Ali's head, :yet after some time, 'Ali killed 'Amr. Concerning this battle, the Holy Prophet said

Verily, one attack of 'Ali in the Battle of Khandaq is better than the worship of all" ".human beings and jinns, up to the Day of Resurrection

This killing of 'Amr demoralized the pagans, and all his companions fled away except .Nawfil, who was also killed by'Ali

The Muslims were short of provisions. The Holy Prophet had to tie a stone on his stomach in order to lessen the pangs of hunger. Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri said: "Our hearts had reached our throats in fear and desperation." On the other hand, the besieging army was getting restive; it could not put up any further with the rain and

;cold

p: ۱۰۵

.its horses were perishing and provisions nearing exhaustion

The Holy Prophet went to the place where the Mosque of Victory (Masjid-ul-Fath) now stands and prayed to Allah. A fierce storm raged which uprooted the tents of the enemies; their pots and belongings went flying in all directions; an unbearable terror was cast in their ranks. The Meccans and the pagan tribes fled away. The first to flee was Abu Sufyan himself who was so upset that he tried to ride his camel without first :untying its rope. This episode is referred to in the Qur'an in this ayat

O ye who believe! Remember the bounty of Allah unto you when came upon you the hosts, so We sent against them a strong wind and hosts that ye saw not: and Allah is (seeing all what you do (Qur'an, ۳۳:۹

:And also in ayat ۲۵ which says

And God turned back the unbelievers in their rage; they did not achieve any advantage, and Allah sufficed for the believers infighting, and

(Allah is Strong, Mighty. (Qur'an, ۳۳:۲۵

:Abdullah ibn Mas'ud was interpreting this ayat in (Tafsir ad-Durrul-Manthur) thus'

"And God sufficed the believers (through 'Ali ibn Abi Talib) in their fight"

As a direct result of this defeat of the infidels' combined forces in the Battle of Ahzab,

the influence of the Quraish waned, and those, tribes who were till then hesitating to accept Islam out of their fear of Quraish began to send deputations to the Prophet. The first deputation came from the tribe of

Mazinah, and it consisted of four hundred persons. They not only accepted Islam but also were ready to settle down at Medina. The Prophet advised them to return to their .homes

Likewise, a deputation of a hundred persons came from the Ashja' and embraced Islam. The tribes of Juhainah lived near them and were influenced by their .conversion. One thousand of their men came to Medina and entered the fraternity

Elimination of the Bann Quraizah

According to the terms of the treaty which the Banu Quraizah had contracted with the Muslims, they were bound to assist the Muslims against outside aggression. But, not to speak of assisting the Muslims or even remaining neutral, they had sided with the Meccans and joined the besieging foe. What was worse, they had tried to -attack the fortress where Muslim women and children had been lodged for safety. Living in such .a close proximity to Medina, they had become a serious menace

As soon as the siege of their own town was lifted, the Muslims surrounded the Banu Quraizah's fortress. For some time they resisted but they ultimately opened the gates of their fortresses on the condition that their fate should be decided by Sa'd ibn Ma'adh, chief of the Aws. Basing his judgement upon the direction contained in the Old Testament itself, Sa'd ruled that the fighting men should be killed and their women and children made captive. The sentence was carried out. It was in this :connection that the following ayats were revealed

And He drove down those of

the people of the Book who backed them from their fortresses, and He cast awe into their hearts: some you killed and you took captive another part (of them). And He made you inherit their land and their dwellings and their properties, and (to) a land (which ye have not yet trodden, and God has power over all things. (Qur'an, ۳۳:۲۶-۲۷

Many critics had described this punishment as harsh. But what other punishment could be meted out to them? They had violated the pact and, instead of helping the Muslims, they joined the forces of their enemies and had actually besieged the Muslims. There were no prisons where prisoners of war could be detained nor any concentration camps where they could be put to forced labor, and the capture of women and children, thoughk appaling to the notions of the present age, was probably the only method known in those days to provide sustenance to them when the earning members of their families had lost their lives. At any rate, this was the .customary aftermath of a war

The Treaty of Hudaibiah and the Pledge of Ridhwan

In Dhul-Qa'dah, ۶ A.H., the Prophet decided to perform the 'umrah (the lesser pilgrimage) to the Ka'bah which had been till then denied to the Muslims due to the hostility of the Meccans. Fourteen hundred Muhajirun and Ansar showed readiness to go with him. Lest there be any misgivings in any quarter about his intentions, he directed the Muslims not to carry any arms other than swords, and he himself put on

.the robes of ihram and took up camels to sacrifice

The Muslims camped at Hudaibiyah, ten miles from Mecca. An envoy was sent to the Meccans to obtain-their permission for visiting the Ka'bah but it was rejected. Instead, the Meccans collected a force to prevent the Muslims from entering Mecca. The Quraish sent Budayl of the tribe of Khuza'ah, to tell the Prophet that he was not allowed to visit the Ka'bah. The Prophet said that he had not gone there to fight but to .perform the pilgrimage

The Quraish deputed 'Urwah ibn Mas'ud al-Thaqafi to have a talk with the Prophet, but nothing came out of it. The Prophet then sent Karash ibn Umayyah to the Quraish, but the messenger was mistreated, and it was only with difficulty that he escaped with his life. The vanguard of the Quraish attacked the Muslims, but it was captured. The Prophet demonstrated great clemency and set the captives free. Ultimately, 'Uthman (who belonged to the same clan to which Abu Sufyan belonged) was sent to persuade the Quraish to allow the Muslims to visit the Ka'bah. News came that 'Uthman had been killed by the Quraish. The Muslims took a pledge on the hands of the Prophet, known as "Bay'atur-Ridhwan", to stand by him to the last. Referring to :this pledge, the Qu'ran says

Indeed God was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to thee under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquility

(on them and rewarded them with a near victory. (Qur'an, ۴۸:۱۸

However, it came to be known later that the news of Uthman's murder was not true. After considerable difficulty, a treaty was ultimately signed with Suhayl ibn 'Amr, :Quraish's envoy, on the following terms reproduced in almost all the Arab Chronicles

. The Muslims should return to Medina that year without performing the pilgrimage

. They could return the next year but their stay should not exceed three days

. The Muslims should not bring any arms with them except sheathed swords

. There would be no war between the Quraish and the Muslims for ten years

 Muslims residing in Mecca would not be allowed to migrate to Medina, but if any .Muslim wanted to settle in Mecca, he should not be prevented from doing so

 Any idolater or Meccan Muslim migrating to Medina without the permission of his clan will be sent back to Mecca, but a Muslim of Medina going back to Mecca without .permission will not be allowed to return

 Any tribe in Arabia will be free to join any of the parties to the pact, and the allies

.also will be bound by this treaty

Although these terms were apparently disadvantageous to the Muslims, the Prophet accepted them. No sooner had the terms been agreed upon than a critical situation arose. Abu Jundal, son of the said Suhail, had been imprisoned by his father for accepting Islam and was being severely mistreated. He

managed to escape and, with his fetters on, reached Hudaibiyah just before the treaty was signed. Suhail, the emissary of the Meccans, demanded his return .according to the terms of the treaty

The Muslims said that the treaty had not been signed yet. Suhail said that if his son was not returned to him, there would be no treaty at all. Abu Jundal pleaded with the Muslims in the name of mercy not to throw him back to the tyranny of the Meccans and showed the injuries they had inflicted upon him. The Muslims were moved to plead his cause and 'Umar made an impassioned appeal, but the Prophet silenced them by declaring that he could not break a treaty. He consoled Abu Jundal by saying .that God would create some way for his deliverance

Some Muslims were unhappy abut this treaty. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab talked very rudely to the Holy Prophet. Afterwards, he used to say: "Never did I have doubt (about the ".(truth of Islam) since my acceptance of Islam except on that day (of Hudaibiyah

The Prophet sacrificed his animals at Hudaybiyah. Having shaved his head, he removed the robes of ihram. Many Muslims were reluctant to do so, but finally they .followed suit

After three days' stay at Hudaibiyah, the Muslims returned to Medina. On the way back, Surah ۴۸ titled "TheVictory" was revealed. It described the treaty as an open victory for the Muslims. Later events confirmed that it was really a great victory for .them

Till then, idolaters

and Muslims had not been mixing with each other. By virtue of this treaty, they started doing so freely. On account of their family relationships and trade connections, the Meccans started visiting Medina, and many of them stayed there for months. In this way, they were getting acquainted with the teachings of Islam and were deeply .impressed by the righteous conduct and moral integrity of the Muslims

The Muslims of Medina who were visiting Mecca left behind them similar impressions. The result was that the Meccans were themselves attracted to Islam and many of them embraced the new religion. It is recorded that during the two years following this treaty, more people accepted Islam than during the whole nineteen years since the inception of the mission. A clear proof is found in the fact that while only ۱,۴۰۰ Muslims had accompanied the Prophet for the lesser pilgrimage when the treaty of Hudaibiyah was concluded, two years later, that is, when Mecca fell in the hands of .the Muslims, ۱۰,۰۰۰ Muslims accompanied him

Inviting Sovereigns of Neighboring States

The tranquility afforded by the Hudaibiyah peace treaty gave an opportunity to the Prophet to propagate Islam throughout Arabia and to enable Islam to embark upon its attempt to embrace all humanity. He sent ambassadors with his letters to Heraclius, the Byzantine emperor, to Khusro Parviz Il, the Kisra of Persia, to the kings of Egypt and Abyssinia, the chiefs of Yemen and Syria. These letters have been .preserved and reproduced by Arab chroniclers

The letter to Heraclius, which

:was carried by Dahiyah al-Kalbi, read as follows

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From Muhammad, the slave and Messenger of Allah, to Heraclius, the emperor of Rome. Peace be on him who follows the guidance. After this, I invite you to accept Islam. Accept Islam and you will prosper and Allah will give you double rewards. But if you refuse, the sin of your people also will fall on your shoulders. O People of the Book! Come to a word common between us and you: that we shall not worship anything save Allah, and that we shall not associate anything with Him, nor shall some of us take others for lords besides Allah. But if they .turn back, then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims

Herachus wanted to know more about this religion, so he summoned some Arab merchants who had come to Gaza with a caravan. Abu Sufyan, one of the bitterest enemies of the Prophet, happened to be in that group, so he became its spokesman. The conversation that took place between Heraclius and Abu Sufyan is preserved in :the books of traditions

?Herachus: Is the family of the person claiming prophethood a noble one

.Abu Sufyan: It is a noble family

?Heraclius: Has anyone else in", this family claimed prophethood

.Abu Sufyan: No

?Heraclius: Has there been any king in this family

.Abu Sufyan: No

?Heraclius: Are the people who have accepted this religion weak or influential

.Abu Sufyan: They are weak people

?Heraclius: Are his followers increasing or decreasing

Abu Sufyan: They are

.on the increase

?Heraclius: Have you ever known him to tell lies

.Abu Sufyan: No

?Heraclius: Does he ever commit a breach of any pact

Abu Sufyan: He has not done it so far, but we would like to see if he keeps up a new .peace treaty that we have recently negotiated with him

?Heraclius: Have you ever fought against him

.Abu Sufyan: Yes

?Heraclius: What was the result

.Abu Sufyan: Sometimes we won and sometimes he

?Heraclius: What does he teach

Abu Sufyan: He bids people to worship one God and not to associate any partners with .Him, to offer prayers, to be truthful and chaste, and to bestow alms

:Heraclius then summed up the conversation thus

You say that this man belongs to a noble family. Prophets always come from noble" families. You say that no one else in the family ever before claimed prophethood. Had it been so, I would have thought that he was influenced by family traditions. You say that none of his predecessors was a king. Had it been so, I would have thought that he was aspiring to attain kingship. You admit that he never tells lies. A person who does not tell a lie to a man cannot tell a lie about God. You say that poor people are the adherents of his creed. The first followers of prophets always come from this class. You say that his religion is expanding. This is a characteristic of a true religion. You say that he does not deceive. Prophets do not deceive anyone. You say

that he bids you to offer prayers and to observe purity and chastity. If all this is true, his realm will come right up to my domain. I had thought that a prophet might be coming, but I did not think that he would be born in Arabia. If I could go there, I would ".have paid homage to him

Abu Sufyan used to say that he had to give true answers to the emperor, as he was afraid of being contradicted by one or more of his caravan companion if he gave any .false reply

The envoy sent to Khusro Parviz met a different reception. Khusro Parviz was enraged at the very idea of an ordinary person addressing him, the great Kisra that he was, on terms of equality, so he tore the letter to pieces. Kisra directed his governor of Yemen to arrest the person claiming to be a prophet and to send him to his court. When the governor's messengers arrived at Medina and asked the prophet to comply with Kisra's orders on pain of his country's destruction, the Prophet replied, "Go back and tell him that the Islamic empire will reach the throne of Kisra's .kingdom." Not many years had passed when this prophecy came true

The envoy sent to Harith, chief of the Ghassan tribe ruling Syria, was put to death. This eventually became the cause of a conflict with the Christians which resulted in .the Battle of Mu'tah and the expedition of Tabuk

The Prophet sent an epistle

:to al-Mundhir, the then Iranian Governor of Bahrain. It read as follows

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From Muhammad the Messenger of Allah to al-Mundhir son of Sawa. Peace on him. Praise be to Allah besides Whom there is no other god. And I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. And now I remind you of Allah, the Mighty and the Glorious. Whoever receives admonition receives it for his own good, and whoever obeys my envoys and follows their instructions obeys me. Whoever is sincere to them is sincere to me. My envoys have spoken well of you. I have accepted your intercession on behalf of the people of Bahrain. Leave to the Muslims all they owned before accepting Islam. While I hereby grant indemnity to the wrongdoers, you should also forgive them. You shall not be deposed so long as you conduct yourself well. And whosoever continues following his (religion of) Judaism shall be .(liable to pay the jizyah (defence tax

:The letter sent earlier to Negus, the king of Abyssinia, had read as follows

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From Muhammad the Messenger of Allah to Negus, the king of Abyssinia. Peace be on him who follows the path of Guidance. Praise be to Allah besides Whom there is no other god, the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Preserver of Peace, the Keeper of the Faithful, the Guardian. I bear witness that

Jesus son of Mary is indeed a spirit of God and His word, which He conveyed unto the chaste Virgin Mary. He created Jesus through His word just as he created Adam with His hands. And now I call you to Allah Who is One and has no partner, and to friendship in His obedience. Follow me and believe in what has been revealed to me, for I am the Messenger of Allah. I invite you and your people to Allah, the Mighty, the Glorious. I have conveyed the message, and it is up to you to accept it. Once again, .peace on him who follows the path of guidance

:Another epistle sent to Muqauqis, the then Roman Viceroy over Egypt, was as follows

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From Muhammad, the servant and Messenger of Allah to Muqauqis, Chief of the Copts. Peace be on him who follows the path of Guidance. I invite you to accept the message of Islam. Accept it and you shall prosper. But if you turn away, then upon you shall also fall the sin (of misleading by your example) the Copts. O people of the Book! Come to a word common between us and you: that we shall worship none but Allah and that we shall ascribe no partners unto Him and that none of us shall regard anyone as lord besides God. And if they turn .away, then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims

The Battle of Khaibar

The banishment of the Jewish

tribes of Banu Nadhir and Banu Qinaqa' from Medina had accentuated the animosity of the Jews towards the Muslims. These tribes had settled down at Khaibar at a distance of about eighty miles from Medina. "Khaibar" means: "fortified place". It was a Jewish stronghold comprised of seven fortresses: Naaim, Qamus (on a hill of the same name), Katiba, Shiqu, Natat, Watih and Sulalim, of which Qamus was the most .fortified

These tribes were instigating other tribes to join them in a conclusive assault upon the Muslims. The Battle of Ahzab was the first attempt in which the Jews had participated for the siege of the Muslims. The reverses they had suffered had not deterred them. Their chief, Usir ibn Razam, collected all the Jewish tribes and solicited the aid of Ghatfan for a final showdown. To demonstrate their strength, Ghatfan sent a posse, which captured twenty camels of the Prophet after killing their herdsman and .capturing his wife

The news of the preparation of the Jews was reaching Medina frequently. At last, the Holy Prophet decided to crush them before they could destroy the Muslims. It was the "near victory" foretold in the Sura of "Victory" revealed just after the truce of :Hudaibiyah

Indeed God was well pleased with the Believers when they swore allegiance to thee under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquility on (them and rewarded them with a near victory. (Qur'an, ۴۸:۱۸

By the middle of Muharram, ۷ A.H., the Holy

Prophet marched on Khaibar with ۱,۴۰۰ persons. In about seven days, six of the Jewish fortresses were overrun by the Muslims. Then Qamus was besieged. Abul Fida says :(the following in his book of history: (Tarikhu 'l-mukhtasar fi Akhbari 'l-basha

In those days, the Prophet sometimes used to suffer from migraine. As a matter of chance, on the day he reached Khaibar, he suffered from the same. Abu Bakr, therefore, took the banner and went out to fight but returned unsuccessful. Then Umar took the standard and fought hard, more than his predecessor, but returned equally unsuccessful. When the Prophet came to know of these reversals, he said, "By Allah, tomorrow I will give the standard to a man who loves Allah and His Messenger and whom Allah and His Messenger love, one who is constant in onslaught and does ".not flee, one who will stand firm and will not return till victory is achieved

Having heard this, both the Immigrants and the Helpers aspired for the flag. When the day dawned, having said the morning prayer, the Prophet came and stood among his companions. Then he called for the banner. At that moment, every companion was engrossed in the hope and desire of getting the flag, while the Prophet called for 'Ali who was suffering from red eyes. The Prophet took some of his own saliva on his finger and applied it to 'Ali's eyes. The eyes were at once cured and the Prophet .handed over the standard to him

Shaikh

Abdul-Haqq Muhaddith Dehlavi (traditionist) writes in his Madarijun-Nubuwwah as' :follows

Then 'Ali started with the flag in his hand and, reaching under the fort of Qamus," planted the standard on a rock. A Rabbi who was watching from the fort asked, 'O standard-bearer! Who are you?' 'Ali replied, 'I am 'Ali son of Abu Talib.' The Rabbi called unto his people, 'By the Torah, you will be defeated! This man will not go back '".without winning the battle

:The author of Madarijun-Nubuwwah, states the following

Perhaps that Jew was well informed of 'Ali's valor and had seen his praises in the" ".Torah

:He further states in his afore-mentioned book

Harith, brother of Marhab, first sallied forth from the fort with a huge spear whose" point weighed about ٣ mounds (a measure of weight, varying from a few lb. to ٨۴ lb. according to the custom of the area). In his immediate attack, he killed a number of Muslim veterans. Then 'Ali proceeded towards him and dispatched him to hell. in one stroke. When Marhab was informed of his brother's plight, he rushed out of the fort accompanied by some of the bravest soldiers from the Khaibar garrison to avenge his brother's death. It is said that Marhab was the strongest, tallest, and the most fierce .among the warriors of Khaibar and that none equalled him in his might

That day, he was armed twice over, wearing double armor with two swords dangling

by his sides. He was also wearing two turbans with a helmet over

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and above. He marched ahead in the battlefield singing about his own valor. Nobody among the Muslims dared to fight him in the battlefield. 'Ali, therefore, darted out, reciting about his own valiance in response to Marhab's. Taking the initiative, Marhab .attacked 'Ali with his sword

But 'Ali avoided the blow and rendered with Dhul-Fiqar such a forceful blow on Marhab's head that it cut through the latter's helmet, the double turban, the head, till it reached the man's throat. According to some narratives, it is said that he was cut up to his thigh, in others that it tore him into two parts upon the saddle. Marhab took his way to hell in two pieces. Then the Muslims under the command of 'Ali began fighting .the Jews

Ali himself killed seven generals of the Jewish forces everyone of whom was' considered to be most valiant. After these had been killed, the remnants of the Jewish troops ran helter-skelter towards their fort. 'Ali followed them in hot pursuit. In this rush, one Jew delivered a blow to 'Ali's hand wherein he carried his shield. The shield fell down. Another Jew picked it up and made good with his booty. This infuriated 'Ali, who was now strengthened with such a spiritual force and divine strength that he jumped across the moat and came straight to the door of the iron gate. He dislodged ".it from its hinges, held it up as a shield, and resumed fighting

According to Ibn Hisham's Sirat, and

:according to Al-Tarikh al-Kamil and Abul Fida's Tarikh, Abu Rafi' is cited saying

When the Prophet gave the flag to 'Ali and bade him fight the forces of Khaibar, we," too, accompanied him. When 'Ali was a short distance from the fort, fighting all along, a Jew struck a blow on his hand with such a force that the shield 'Ali was holding fell down. 'Ali at once pulled out a part of the gate of Khaibar, held it up as a shield and fought till Allah granted him a clear victory. Once the fighting was over, he threw it away. It was so heavy that eight men from among us could hardly turn it over from ".one side to the other

An agreement was reached with the Jews of Khaibar. Their lands and movable property were left in their hands. They were allowed to practice their religion freely. In return for the protection they would receive, they were required to pay the Muslims half the produce of their lands. The Prophet maintained the right to turn them out of their lands whenever he so decided. The battle of Khaibar is important as it put an end to the Jewish resistance and, for the first time, a non-Muslim people were .made "Protected Persons" of the Muslim commonwealth

:On the same day, Ja.'far ibn Abi Talib returned from Ethiopia. The Holy Prophet said

I do not know on which blessing of Allah I should thank Him more: on the victory of" Khaibar or on the

"!return of Jaf'ar

Fadak

The Holy Prophet then sent an expedition with 'Ali ibn Abi Talib to a Jewish tribe living in Fadak. Without any battle, they agreed to the same terms as the people of Khaibar .had

The income from Khaibar was for all Muslims in general, whereas the income from Fadak was exclusively for the Prophet because it was taken without any use of force. Jalaluddin al-Suyuti states in Ad-Durr al-Manthur on the authority of Bazaar, Abu Yaala and Ibn Abi Hatim who have taken the tradition from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri that when the verse: Wa aati dhal-Qurba Haqqahu (Qur'an, Chap. ١٧, V. ٢۶), ("and give thy kinsfolk their dues") was revealed, the Prophet gave the property of Fadak as a gift to :Fatimah. Ibn 'Abbas has narrated that

When the verse And give thy kinsfolk their dues' was revealed, the Prophet assigned" ".the Fadak property to Fatimah

A Visit to Mecca

According to the terms of the treaty with the Meccans, the Muslims could visit Mecca the next year. Towards the end of the seventh year of Hijra (March ۶٢٩ C.E.) the Prophet, accompanied by about two thousand Muslims, proceeded to Mecca to make the lesser pitgrimage (the 'umrah). The Quraish left their houses and watched the Muslims from their tents pitched on the heights- of the surrounding hills. After three .days' sojourn, the Muslims retired strictly in accordance with the terms of the treaty

The Battle of Mu'ta

It has already been mentioned that the envoy sent to the Ghassanid prince of Busra had been killed en

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route at the hands of Shurahbil, a feudatory of the Byzantine emperor. In order to exact reparations, the Prophet, on his return to Medina after the pilgrimage, sent a force of ٣,٠٠٠ men with an order to go to the place where the envoy (Harith ibn 'Umayr al-Azdi) had been killed.

The Holy Prophet gave to Zaid ibn Harithah the command of the army, saying, "If Zaid is killed, then Jatar ibn Abi Talib will be the commander, and if he, too, is killed, then 'Abdullah ibn Rawahah will command the army. And if he is killed, then the Muslims should select someone as their commander."

Hearing it, a Jew said: "If he is a true Prophet, none of these three will remain alive." Before dispatching this expedition, he instructed them as follows:

 Many servants of God will be busy worshipping Him in their places of worship (churches). Do not touch them.

 Do not lift your hand against any woman (to strike her).

 Do not kill any child or minor boy.

 Do not kill any old person.

 Do not destroy any green tree.

These instructions imparted in an age when hardly any scruples were exercised during bloody engagements indicate the depth of the Prophet's compassion and the .efforts he was exerting to effect reforms in all walks of life

The Muslim force marched under the command of Zaid ibn Harithah to Mu'ta in Syria. ,In order to meet it, the Syrians had raised a huge army. Although far outnumbered

the Muslim force gave a heroic account of its valor, but the disparity in number was too great. When its commander, Zaid, was slain, the command was taken over by Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, a cousin of the Holy Prophet. He, too, was killed and 'Abdullah ibn Rawahah, took the command. When, as prophesied by the Holy Prophet, he, too, was martyred, the command went to Khalid ibn al-Walid who was able to bring about a .successful retreat

The Holy Prophet was much grieved by the death of Zaid and Ja'far. About Ja'far, whose hands were both severed before he fell down, the Holy Prophet said that Allah had given him two wings of emerald in place of his arms whereby he flies in the .(Garden with the angels. That is why Ja'far is known as at-Tayyar (the flyer

The Fall of Mecca

One of the conditions of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah was that the Quraish would not fight against any ally of the Muslims, nor should the Muslims fight against any ally of the Quraish. In simple language, the clause of ۱۰-years' cease-fire included the allies .as well as the principals

During the month of Ramadhan of ۸ A.H., the Banu Khuza'ah, an ally of the Muslims, were attacked by Banu Bakr and their allies, the Quraish. By virtue of their alliance with the Muslims, the Banu Khuza'ah sought the aid and protection of the Prophet. The Prophet sent an emissary to the Quraish to persuade them to accept any of the :following terms

Reparations should

be paid for the massacred people of Banu Khuza'ah, or The Quraish should break .their alliance with Banu Bakr, or The treaty of Hudaibiyah should be abrogated

The Quraish accepted the last alternative. The time had come to free the citadel of Islam from idolatry and to end the reign of oppression in Mecca. The Prophet marched with ten thousand men on the ۱۰th of the month of Ramadhan and camped a short distance from Mecca. The Meccans sent a few scouts, including Abu Sufyan, to find out the strength of the Muslim army. Abu Sufyan was seen by 'Abbas, uncle of the .Holy Prophet, who took him to the Holy Prophet

The Prophet, in honor of the recommendation made by his uncle, offered protection to Abu Sufyan. Then the Prophet said, "Isn't it time for you to know the creed: La ilaha illa-Allah?!" Abu Sufyan replied, "Why not?" Then the Prophet further asked him, "And is it not the time for you to confirm that I am the Messenger of Allah?!" Abu Sufyan said, "I have still some doubt about it." At this response, 'Abbas rebuked Abu Sufyan: "Fie upon you, fellow! Confirm his prophethood or you will be killed!" So Abu Sufyan recited both declarations of the creeds of confirmation, and with him Hakim ibn Hizam .and Budail ibn Warqa' also accepted the Islamic creed

:Abul-Fida writes the following in his Tarikh

Then the Prophet asked 'Abbas to take Abu Sufyan round the valley of Mazeeq and " to show him the army

of Islam. 'Abbas said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Abu Sufyan is a boaster! Perhaps you should give him some distinctive order so that he may have a chance to boast about it among the Quraish.' The Prophet said, 'Well, then, whoever seeks refuge in Abu Sufyan's house shall be given protection. And also he who seeks refuge in the Sacred Mosque and in the house of Hakim Bin Hizam or shuts the door of his house shall be .'given protection

Abbas further says, 'Then I took Abu Sufyan for a review of the Islamic army. At Abu' Sufyan's request, I pointed out to the eminent people from every clan who were present in the Islamic regiments. In the meantime, the Prophet passed by his army, which was clad in green uniforms. Abu Sufyan cried out `O 'Abbas! Verily your nephew has acquired quite a kingdom!' 'Abbas said to him, 'Woe unto thee! This is no kingship! "!It is prophethood

Apart from a slight resistance offered by 'Ikrimah and Safwan, Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) entered Mecca almost unopposed. It happened on a Friday, the ۲۰th of the month of .Ramadhan, ۸ A.H

The city which had scoffed and jeered at Muhammad's prophetic mission, ruthlessly persecuted him and his disciples and ultimately driven his disciples away, had created all manner of obstacles in the propagation of the faith and had waged war upon war on the Muslims. This same city now lay at his feet. At this moment of triumph, he could have done anything he

wished with the city and the citizens, but he had not come to the world to cause misery or bloodshed but as a benefactor of mankind, to proclaim the message of God and to guide erring humanity to the righteous course: to the worship of the One and .Only God

:Abdullah ibn Mas'ud says'

Entering Masjidul-Haram, the Holy Prophet started breaking and demolishing the" idols. There were three hundred and sixty idols fixed in the walls and on the roof of the Ka'bah with lead or tin. Any idol near which the Prophet went and towards which :he pointed his cane, saying

Right has come and falsehood has vanished; verily falsehood is destined to vanish ((Qur'an, ۱۷:۸۱

The idol fell headlong on the ground without anyone touching it. Lastly, there remained an idol of Banu Khuza'ah on the rooftop of the Ka'bah. It was made of polished brass. The Prophet ordered 'Ali to climb on his shoulders, which 'Ali did, ".throwing that last idol down which shattered into pieces on impact

Then he ordered Bilal, the Ethiopian, to go on the rooftop of the Ka'bah to call the adhan. The wordings of the adhan, coupled with the fact that it was called by a freed Negro slave, caused much heartache among the Quraishites. After clearing the Ka'bah, the first House of God built by Ibrahim (a.s.), of all the symbols of idolatry, he :assembled the Quraish and delivered the following sermon to them

There is no god but Allah. He has no partners. He has"

fulfilled His promise and helped His slave and defeated all coalitions (allied) against him. All authority, revenge and blood reparations are under my feet. The guardianship of the Ka'bah and the arrangements for the supply of water to pilgrims are exempt. O! You Quraish! The arrogance of the heathen days and all pride of ancestry God has ".wiped out. All mankind descended from Adam, and Adam was made of clay

:He then recited the following verse of the Qur'an

O people! Surely We have created you of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may identify one another. Surely the most honorable ofyou with Allah is the one among you who is most pious; surely Allah is Knowing, (Aware. (Qur'an, ۴۹:۱۳

Having dwelt upon the equality and brotherhood of mankind and preached the Unity and the Omnipotence of God, he inquired from the Quraish: "Descendants of Quraish! How do you think I should act towards you?" "With kindness and pity, gracious .brother and nephew," beseeched they

:The Prophet magnanimously declared

I shall speak to you as Yusuf spoke unto his brothers: 'There is no reproach against" you today; God will forgive. He is the most Merciful and the most Compassionate."' ((Qur'an,۱۲:۹۲

Then he said to them:"Go; you are free!" Mecca lay conquered but not a single house was plundered, nor any woman insulted. Cruelties, insults and oppression perpetrated during a long period of twenty-one years were now forgiven. The Muhajirun were asked even to forego

their houses and properties, which on their migration to Medina had been occupied by the Meccans. Through all the annals of history, there have seldom been any .conquests like this

The result of this magnanimity and' compassion was that those very die-hards who had relentlessly opposed the Prophet and refused to listen to the Divine message converged around him in their multitudes and accepted Islam. The glad tidings given by God about the peace of Hudaybiyah came true and His injunction had been ,:obeyed

When there comes assistance from Allah and victory, and when you see men entering the religion of Allah in companies, then celebrate the praise of your Lord, and implore (His forgiveness; surely He is oft-returning (to mercy). (Qur'an, Ch. ١١٠

Once the Meccans submitted to the faith, disciples were sent out to all neighboring tribes to invite them, with peace and good will, to embrace Islam. Many tribes responded positively to the call. However, there was one tragic incident, which must be mentioned. Khalid ibn al-Walid (who had accepted Islam a few months before the fall of who had already accepted

Mecca) was sent to Banu Khuzaimah Islam. When they learned of Khalid's arrival, they came out cautiously armed. Khalid asked them who they were and in reply he was informed: "They are Muslims following the teaching of Muhammed; they pray in the recognized form of prayer, have built a mosque, recite the adhan and the iqamah and gather together on Fridays for prayers." Khalid then asked them why

.they had come out to meet him armed

They said that they were on inimical terms with a fellow Arab clan and mistook Khalid's men for their enemies. But Khalid did not accept their explanation and asked them to yield their arms. They at one yielded. Khalid then ordered his companions to tie their hands behind their shoulders, then he placed them in the custody of his comrades. Early next morning, he ordered that the custodian of each of the prisoner should himself kill that prisoner. Thus, these innocent Muslims were killed then and .there

Another version of this incident says that when Banu Khuzaimah submitted their arms at the order of Khalid, he himself unsheathed his sword and killed one hundred men of that clan. Someone from Banu Khuzaimah informed the Prophet about this tyranny. The Prophet was angered and in dismay thrice repeated, "O Lord! I deplore Khalid's "!action

Abul-Fida adds: "Then the Prophet sent 'Ali with gold to Banu Khuzaimah and ordered that the blood money of the victims and compensation for their lost properties should ".be paid with the same. 'Ali did as he was bidden

The Battle of Hunain

The violent tribes of Hawazin and Thaqif joined hands. Collecting a large force, they marched upon the Muslims. In order to enable them to pursue their hostility to the bitter end and to inspire their own ranks to desperate deeds, they had brought their families with them. On the ۶th of Shawwal, a pitched battle was fought at Hunain, about ten miles

from Mecca. The Hawazin and Thaqif had taken up vantage positions. They almost took the Muslims by surprise, attacking them in the early hours of the morning. They fought in a spirit of desperation. The Muslims first lost ground and their defeat .seemed imminent

At that time, a cousin of the Holy Prophet named Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith was holding the bridle of the Prophet's horse. As the Prophet was witnessing his people's retreat, he called out to them, "Where are you rmming off to?!" But nobody was paying any attention to him. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) then told his uncle 'Abbas to call the Muslims .back. 'Abbas wondered as to how his voice would reach the fleeing herd

The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said that Allah would cause his voice to reach them, no matter how far they might have gone. 'Abbas called them in these words as the Prophet had taught him: "O group of the Helpers! O people of the tree of Samrah!" Those who proved to be firm in the battle of Hunain include 'Abbas, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, Abu Sufyan ibn alHarith, 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib, 'Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam and .Usamah ibn Zaid

AI-Halabi remarks in Al-Sira alHalabiyya that only four persons remained with the Holy Prophet, three of whom were Hashimites, i.e., 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, 'Abbas and Abu .Sufyan ibn al-Harith, and one non-Hashimite, i.e., 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud

:Abul-Fida makes another point. He says

When the Muslims fled, the secret malice which the people of Mecca entertained"

against the Muslims was exposed. Abu Sufyan ibn Harb gleefully cried out, 'They will "!not stop until they reach the seashore

However, after the call of 'Abbas, at last the deserters returned and ultimately the Hawazin and Thaqif were totally routed. The Thaqif took refuge in the city of Ta'if but the families of the Hawazin, with all their flocks and herds, fell into the hands of the Muslims. Ta'if was besieged, but the siege was lifted a day later. The Hawazin .approached the Prophet and beseeched him to restore their families to them

The Prophet answered them that he could not compel his army to forego all the fruits of victory and that if they wanted their families back, they would have to forego their worldly goods. To this, the Hawazin consented. On the next day, on the advice of the Holy Prophet, they approached the Prophet and repeated their request. The Prophet replied, "My own share of the captives, and that of the children of 'Abdul-Muttalib, I give back to you at once." The army followed suit, and six thousand people were set free. The Hawazin were so overwhelmed by this generosity that many of them .accepted Islam there and then

The spoils of the war, which consisted of ۲۴,۰۰۰ camels, ۴۰,۰۰۰ goats, and a considerable quantity of silver, were distributed among the army. In making the distribution, the newly converted Muslims as well as many non-Muslims of Mecca, known in history as "mu'allafatul qulub" (those who were helped in

order to win their hearts) were given disproportionately larger shares. Some Ansar considered this as an act of partiality, and their discontent was reported to the Prophet. It was also reported that Ansar feared that now that Mecca was conquered, the Holy Prophet would return to it and migrate from Medina. The Holy Prophet :delivered a lecture to them wherein he said

O Ansar! I have learned about your discourse. When I came to you, you were" wandering in the dark, and the Lord gave you the right direction. You were suffering, and He made you happy. You were enemies of one another, and He filled your hearts "?with brotherly love and concord. Was it not so, tell me

Indeed, it is even as you say," was the reply: "Lord and to His Prophet belong the" ".benevolence and the grace

Nay, by the Lord," continued the Prophet, "but you might have answered (my" questions), and answered truly, for I would have testified to its truth myself 'You came to us rejected as an impostor, and we believed in you; you came as a helpless fugitive and we assisted you; you were poor and outcast, and we gave you asylum, comfortless and we solaced you. 'O Ansar! Why do you disturb your hearts because of the things of this life? Are ye not satisfied that others should return with the flocks and the camels, while you go back to your homes with me in your midst? By Him Who holds my life in His

hands, I shall never abandon you. If all mankind went one way and the Ansar went another, surely I would join the Ansar. The Lord be favorable to them, and bless them, "!and their children, and their children's children

At these words, say the chroniclers, they all wept until tears ran down their beards. And they all cried with one voice, "Yes, Prophet of God, we are well satisfied with our share." (meaning the presence of Holy Prophet in Medina). Thereupon they retired .happy and contented. Muhammad soon after returned to Medina

Islam Spreads

point

The fall of Mecca was the signal for an unprecedented rush to accept Islam. As 'Amr :ibn Salamah, a foster son and companion of the Prophet, stated

The Arabs were waiting for the Quraish to accept Islam. They used to say that" Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) must be left to his people. If he would emerge victorious over them, he is undoubtedly a true prophet. When Mecca was conquered, all the tribes ".hastened to accept Islam

Zakah collectors were sent into the territories that came under the Muslims' control. These officials not only demonstrated great fairness in collecting the zakah and jizyah, but also preached effectively to the people, for most of them were pious and God-fearing people. After the fall of Mecca, teachers were sent in all directions to bring the people to God's way, and they met with so much success that hosts upon hosts flocked to the Prophet. It is about such mass conversions that the Qur'an has :stated

When

there comes assistance from Allah and victory, and you see men entering the religion .(of Allah in companies. (Qur'an, ١١٠:١-٢

After the order was issued prohibiting the polytheists from entering the Sacred .Mosque, the entire Hijaz was Muslim

By the ١٠th of Hijra, the influence of Islam had reached Yemen, Bahrain, Yamama, Oman, Iraq, and Syria. The Chief of the Daws, a tribe in Yemen, had accepted Islam even before the emigration. In ٨ A.H., Khalid was sent to Yemen to preach Islam but could not make much headway. Then 'Ali went there and read the epistle of the Prophet; the entire tribe of Harridan accepted Islam. In ١٠ A.H., Wabr was deputed to contact the leading Persians residing in Yemen. Firoz Dailami, Markabood and Wahb ibn Munabbih accepted Islam through him. Ma'adh ibn Jabal and Abu Musa al-Ash'ari :were also sent to Yemen with the following instructions

Be polite, not harsh; give glad tidings to the people and condemn them not. Work" together. When you meet people who already follow some religion, preach to them about the Oneness of God and (my) Messengership; if they accept, tell them that God has enjoined prayers five times in a day and night. If they agree to do so, tell them that zakah is also obligatory upon those who can afford to pay in order to help the poor. If they give zakah do not pick out only things of better quality. Beware of the curse and the supplication of victims, for they reach

".straight to God

Their efforts met with considerable success. Meanwhile, Khalid was inviting people to .the faith in Najran and the tribe of Abdul-Madan came forward to accept it

In ٨ A.H., Munqir ibn Habn of the tribe of 'Abdul-Qais of Bahrain visited Medina and accepted Islam. Through his efforts and those of his father, their tribe entered the fold and sent a deputation of fourteen persons to the Prophet. In the same year, 'Ala al-Hadhrami was sent to Bahrain to preach to the people. He succeeded in converting .its governor, Mundhir ibn Sawa and the public followed suit

Similarly, Abu Zaid al-Ansari and 'Amr ibn al-'Aas were sent to Oman in ٨ A.H. with letters from the Prophet to its chieftains Ubaid and Jaifar. When the chieftains accepted Islam, the whole tribe of Azd responded favorably to the invitation. [The original letter has now been discovered, and its photo was published in the Light .[magazine (Dar-es-salaam), of June ١٩٧٨

By ٩ A.H., Islam was gaining some adherents in Syria. Its governor, Farwah, became Muslim. When the Roman emperor learned about it, Farwah was guillotined. He died with a couplet on his lips saying: "Convey my message to the Muslim leaders that I ".sacrifice my body and honor in the way of God

As Islam started spreading to the farthest corners of Arabia, a large number of deputations from different tribes began pouring into Medina. Ibn Ishaq has given details of fifteen of them. Ibn Sa'd describes seventy deputations, and the same number is mentioned

by al-Damyati, al Mughaltai and Zainuddin al-Iraqi. Hafiz Ibn Qaiyyim and al-Qastalani have critically verified the accounts of these deputations and have themselves given .details of thirty-four others

It was thus, and thus alone, that Islam gradually spread. During a short period of time, .it blazed in radiant splendor over the continents

(.An Expedition to Tabuk (Rajab, ٩ A.H

The indecisive battle at Mu'ta had stirred a considerable chagrin to the Roman emperor, Heraclius. Elated by his victories over the Persians and apprehensive of the growing power of the Muslims, he directed his feudatories to collect a huge force to invade Arabia. The tribes of Lakhm, Hudham, Amela and Ghassan gathered to help the Roman army. When news of this preparation reached Medina through a trade .caravan, it caused a great deal of anxiety among the Muslims

How alarmed they were can be judged from one incident: A neighbor of 'Umar knocked at his door in the night. When 'Umar came out and inquired what the matter was, the visitor said a calamity had befallen. 'Umar asked whether the Ghassanids had come. The visitor was perturbed over another matter but the attack of the Ghassanids was considered so imminent that Umar's frst thought went to it. In order to meet this danger, the Prophet hastily collected a force of ٣٠,٠٠٠ volunteers with .١٠,٠٠٠ horses among them

In spite of the severe famine that had overtaken Najd and Hijaz and the intense heat of the weather, his people rallied around him. Those who were in a position to do

so generously donated large sums of money to meet the expenses of the expedition and to buy weapons and armor to those who could not afford to buy them. This was the first occasion when an appeal for public donations was made, and many Muslims .responded generously

An old and very poor woman brought a small quantity of dates as her contribution. Some hypocrites ridiculed her, but the Holy Prophet said that her contribution was more precious in the sight of Allah than that of many people who had contributed only .to show off

The Holy Prophet left 'Ali as his deputy in Medina. 'Ali exclaimed with dismay, "Are you leaving me behind?" The Prophet said, "'Ali! Are you not satisfied that you have the same position in relation to me as Aaron had with Moses, except that there is no prophet after me?" The Prophet thereby meant that as Moses had left Aaron behind to look after his people when he went to receive the Commandments, he was likewise leaving 'Ali behind as his deputy to look after the affairs of the Muslims during his .absence

The Prophet marched at the head of this force to Tabuk, a place situated midway between Medina and Damascus. There, they came to know, to their relief, that the news of the Ghassanids' attack was incorrect. Having stayed for twenty-four days at .Tabuk, the Muslim army returned to Medina

The Prophet had marched to Tabuk in order to forestall the Ghassanids and the Byzantines, but a certain

Western historian has surmised that the aim of this expedition was expansion, viz. to capture the trade routes leading to the more prosperous towns of Syria. Had this been so, there was no sense in returning to Medina without even attempting to fulfill that object after having taken all the trouble and the expenditure over the expedition during the most inconvenient time of the year. But these detractors have their own .mission to fulfill

The Year of the Deputations

During the ninth year of the Hijra, a large number of deputations from far-flung non-Muslim tribes came to the Prophet to accept Islam. They had been impressed by the record of the Muslims, and the news of his being a true prophet was fast spreading. Among these tribes were the people of Ta'if who had once driven the Prophet out of .their city and whose siege after the battle of Hunain had been lifted by the Muslims

In order to preach the doctrines of Islam, teachers were sent to different provinces. They were directed by the Prophet to "deal gently with the people, and not to be harsh, cheer them, and condemn them not. And you will meet with many People of the Book who will question you: 'What is the key to heaven?' Tell them that it (the key to ".heaven) is to testify to the Unity of God, and to do good deeds

The tribe of Tay was, however, creating some obstacles. 'Ali was deputed with a small force to discipline them. The chief of the

tribe, 'Adi son of Hatim, fled but his sister and some of his principal clansmen fell into 'Ali's hands. Having had regard for the great benevolence and generosity of her father, Hatim, the Prophet set the daughter free, along with all the captives, giving them many gifts. They were so touched by this generous treatment that the entire .tribe, including its chief 'Adi, accepted Islam

Pagans Forbidden from Visiting the Ka'bah

Towards the end of that year, an order was issued prohibiting non-believers from entering the Ka'bah or performing idolatrous rites and degrading ceremonies of their .cults within its sacred precincts

It is recorded that first Abu Bakr was sent with Chapter AlBara'ah to proclaim it before :the pagans. But Gabriel said to the Holy Prophet

".Except for the person who is from thy own house, nobody can ably preach it"

So he called 'Ali and charged him with the duty of preaching the relevant ayats of Al-:Bara'ah. Abu Bakr, therefore, returned to the Prophet and asked him

"?O Messenger of Allah! Did you receive any decree from Allah against me"

:The Prophet replied by saying

No, but the Lord ordered that either I or someone from my own house should preach"
".it

:At the time of the pilgrimage, this proclamation was read out by'Ali

No idolater shall after this year perform the pilgrimage; no one shall circle (the" Ka'bah) naked. Whoever has a treaty with the Prophet, it shall continue to be binding till its termination. For the rest, four months are allowed to everyone to return to his territories. Thereafter, there will

be no obligation on the Prophet except towards those with whom treaties have been ".concluded

(Mubahalah (Imprecation

In the same year, an envoy was sent to Najran to invite that Christian tribe to Islam. They consulted among themselves and selected a committee of fourteen persons to go and study the life and habits of the Prophet and make a report. Out of them, three were considered to be leaders in all affairs. One of the latter was named 'Abdul-Masih .'Aqib. Another was called Sayyid and the third was named Abul-Harith

When the deputation reached Medina, they dressed themselves in silk garments, put on gold rings; then went to the mosque. All of them greeted the Prophet traditionally, but the Prophet did not respond, turning his face away from them. They left the mosque and approached 'Uthman and 'Abdur Rahman ibn 'Awf complaining: "Your Prophet wrote us inviting us here, but when we came to him and greeted him, he neither reciprocated our greeting nor said a word to us. Now what do you advise us to "?do? Should we go back or wait here

Uthman and 'Abdur Rahman ibn 'Awf sought 'Ali's advice. 'Ali said, "These people' should first remove the silk clothes and gold rings. Then they should go and see the Prophet." When they did as they were advised, the Prophet responded to their greetings and said, "By the Lord Who has appointed me as His own Messenger, when ,they first came to me, they were accompanied by Satan." Thereafter

the Prophet preached to them and invited them to accept Islam. They asked him: "What is your opinion about Jesus?" The Prophet said, "You may rest today in this city ".and, after being refreshed, you will receive the reply to all of your questions from me

:The next day, the Prophet recited before them these Qur'anic verse

Surely the likeness of Isa (Jesus) with Allah is as the likeness ofAdam: He created him from dust then said to him, 'Be, and he was. The truth is from your Lord, so be not of (the doubters. (Qur'an, ۳:۵۹-۶۰

They did not accept the words of the Lord and insisted on their own belief. Then the :following verse was revealed

But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of the knowledge, say: Come! Let us call our sons and your sons, and your women and our women, and ourselves and yourselves, then let us pray earnestly and bring about the (curse of Allah on the liars. (Qur'an, ۳:۶۱

:They sought a day's respite and privately solicited 'Aqib's advice. He said

By God! You know that Muhammad is the Messenger of the Lord and that he has" given a clear and appreciable verdict. Do not enter into a maledictory trial with him or else you should be destroyed. If you wish to remain adhering to your religion, accept ".to pay the jizyah and make a pact

On the next day, therefore, they came out on one side and on the other the

Prophet came out of his house carrying Husain in his arms as Hasan was walking by his side holding his finger. Behind him was Fatimah and behind her 'Ali. Praise be to Allah! What a time it was! What an atmosphere! How good a witness and how glorious !the witnessed

In short, the Prophet confronted the Christian delegates and said to Hasan, Husain, :Fatimah and'Ali

".When I curse them, you say Amen'together"

When the Christians saw the five holy Purified ones, they were awe-struck. Abul-:Harith, who was the wisest of them all, said

My people! At this moment, we are looking at such personalities that if they pray to" God, they can move mountains. Abstain from this maledictory conflict (Mubahalah) or ".else you should be destroyed and no Christian will remain on the face of the earth

:They pleaded to the Prophet

".O Abul-Qasim! We shall not have a malediction with you"

The Prophet invited them to accept Islam. They declined and said that they were prepared for a treaty that they would present two thousand pieces of garments each

costing ۴۰ dirhams every year. According to another tradition, it is stated that they also agreed to give ۳۰ horses, ۳۰ camels, ۳۰ coats of mail and ۳۰ lances every year. .Thus, a settlement was made

When the Christians of Najran refrained from entering into a maledictory conflict :against the Prophet, he said

By the Lord who has appointed me as his Messenger in truth, had they chosen the" malediction, there would have been a shower of fire upon

".them in this very field

:Says Jabir

The verse (Chap. ٣, verse ٦١) was revealed in reference to this contest. In this verse," the word "selves" refers to the Prophet and 'Ali; the word "sons" refers to Hasan and ".Husain, and the word "women" refers to Fatimah

In the Tarikh of Tabari, it is stated that during the ١٠th year of Hijrah, the Prophet sent 'Ali to Yemen. Prior to that, he had sent Khalid ibn al-Walid in order to call the people of Yemen to Islam, but nobody accepted Islam. Then the Prophet sent 'Ali and authorized him that he might, if he so desired, dismiss Khalid or anyone else from his .party

So, 'Ali went to Yemen and read the Prophet's statement to the people there. As a result, in one day, all members of the clan of Hamadan were converted to Islam. 'Ali informed the Prophet of this success whereupon the Prophet said, "Peace be upon the Hamdanites!" Thereafter, all Yemenites entered into the folds of Islam. 'Ali again informed the Prophet of the progress which he had made. The Prophet was so .overjoyed; he offered a sajdah (prostration) to thank Allah

During this year, the Prophet deputed 'Ali to go to receive the jizya from the Najranites. 'Ali obeyed the orders and joined the Prophet only during the Farewell Hajj .(pilgrimage) as, on the ٢٥th of Dhul-'qadah, the Prophet had left Medina for Hajj

The Farewell Pilgrimage

point

In this year, (۱۰ A.H.) the Holy Prophet performed his last pilgrimage, details of which

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are fairly well-known. During his journey back, the Holy Prophet stopped at Ghadir .Khum

Al-Nasa'i in Kitabul Khasa'is narrates a tradition from Zaid ibn al-Arqam on the :authority of Abu al-Tufail which runs thus

Returning from the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet camped at Ghadir Khum. He ordered a pulpit to be made for him. Once the pulpit had been made,he graced it and said, "I have been called back by the Lord, and I have submitted to His orders. Now I leave among you two valuable things, one of them is the Qur'an and the other is my progeny. These shall not separate from each other till they meet me together at the Kawthar in Heaven; therefore, be careful and guard yourselves in your dealings with the Quean and with my progeny after me." Then the Prophet added, "Hearken! Allah is my Master, and I am the master of the believers." Then he raised 'Ali's hand and said, "'Ali is the Master of whoever accepts me as his master. O Lord! Befriend " !whoever befriends 'Ali and alienate Yourself from whoever alienates 'Ali

:Abu al-Tufail says

When I heard this tradition, I inquired from Zaid ibn al-Arqam: 'Did you hear the" Prophet saying these words?' Zaid ibn al-Arqam said, 'Not only I but all those who surrounded the pulpit (did so). They had seen with their own eyes that the Prophet '" .was speaking those words, and they heard them with their own ears

According to another tradition quoted by al-Nasa'i, the Prophet stood up

:and, having praised the Lord and enumerated His mercies, he asked the gathering

My people! Do you not know that I have more authority over you than you" "?yourselves have

:All of them replied

Yes, we bear witness to the fact that you have more authority over us than we have" ".ourselves

:Then the Prophet held 'Ali by the hand and said

".Ali is the Master of anyone whose master I am"

.This incident took place on the ١٨th of Dhu-Hijjah, ١٠ A.H

Prophet's Illness and Usamah's Expedition

:In Tarikh of Abul-Fida, it is stated that

After his return from the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet resided at Medina till the" close of the ١٠th year of Hijrah. In Muharram of ١١ A.H., the Prophet fell ill. Then he called all his wives at the residence of Maimunah, Mother of the Faithful, where he

was staying at that time, requesting them to permit him to remain at the residence of any one particular wife from among them. All of them allowed him to stay during the ".period of his illness at'Ayishah's

Ibn al-Wardi writes in his history that during his illness, the Prophet commissioned an army to be led by Usamah son of the late Zaid ibn Harithah to march to Mu'ta in order .to avenge the death of his father. The Prophet insisted upon its immediate departure

On the next day, in spite of his serious condition, the Prophet personally prepared a flag and handed it over to Usamah saying, "Go in the Name of Allah and fight the infidels in His Name." Usamah

went out and handed over the standard to Buraidah ibn al-Khusaib whom he appointed as the army's standard-bearer. Having left Medina, he stopped at a village named Jarf which is close to Medina and the army gathered there. The Prophet had also ordered that barring 'Ali, all other principal Immigrants and Helpers, including Abu Bakr, 'Umar, Uthman, Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas, Abu Ubaidah ibn al jarrah and others, should accompany Usamah. Some companions felt insulted at the Prophet's appointing the son of a freed slave to lead the senior Immigrants and Helpers, so they started grumbling and criticizing. When the news reached the Prophet, he felt dismayed. Despite his fever and headache, he angrily came out of his residence, :mounted the pulpit and declared

O people! What is this you are saying on Usamah's appointment as the commander" of the army? You talked in a similar manner when Usamah's father was commissioned to lead the army in the battle of Mu'ta. By Allah!, Usamah deserves to " .be a commander and his father also deserved the leadership of the army

The Farewell Pilgrimage

Shahristani, in his book Kitabul Milal wan Nihal, and Nawwab Siddiq Hasan Khan in his :book Hujajul Karamah, state that the Prophet ordered his companions thus

Make haste in joining Usamah's legion. May Allah curse whoever fags behind" ".Usamah's army

:In Madarijun-Nubuwwah, the following is stated

Then, in accordance with the orders of the Prophet, Usamah went to the camp and"
,ordered the army to march. When he was about to mount his steed

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his mother informed him that the Prophet was in the agony of death. Receiving this news, Usamah and other companions went back. Abu Bakr and 'Umar were still in "...Medina; they had not joined the army camp

Death and Burial

:In Sahih Muslim, there is a famous tradition narrated by Ibn 'Abbas saying

Three days before the Prophet's death, 'Umar ibn alKhattab and other companions were present by his side. The Prophet said, "Now let me write something for you whereby you shall not go astray after me." 'Umar said, "The Prophet is overcome by ".illness; you have the Qur'an, the Book of Allah, which is sufficient for us

Umar's statement caused a furor among those present. Some were saying that the' Prophet's command should be obeyed so that he might write whatever he desired to write for their guidance. Others sided with'Umar. When the tension and uproar intensified, the Prophet said, "Get away from me!" Therefore, Ibn 'Abbas used to say, "It was a miserable, absolutely miserable, occurrence that the conflict of opinion and noise made by the people came in the way of the Prophet's writing a will and, because ".of it, the Prophet could not leave behind what he wanted to put on paper

:Sa'eed ibn Jubayr's narrative is thus recorded in Sahih Bukhari

Ibn 'Abbas said, "What a miserable day it was that Thursday!," and he wept so bitterly that the pebbles lying there became wet with his tears. Then he continued, When on a Thursday, the Prophet's sickness intensified, he

said, 'Get me the things to write with so that I may write something by which you may never be misguided after me.' People differed and quarreled over the matter, although quarreling in the presence of the Prophet was unseemly. People said that the Prophet was talking in delirium. The Prophet cried out, 'Go away from me! I am more sound than you are.'"

It is stated in Rawdatul-ahbab that the Prophet said to Fatimah, "Bring your sons to me." Fatimah brought Hasan and Husain to the Prophet. Both of them greeted the Prophet, sat by his side and wept at witnessing the agony of the Prophet in such a manner that the people who saw them weeping could not hold their tears. Hasan rested his face upon the Prophet's face and Husain rested his head upon the Prophet's chest.

The Prophet opened his eyes and kissed his grandsons lovingly, enjoining the people to love and respect them. In another tradition, it is stated that the companions who were present there, having seen Hasan and Husain weep, wept so loudly that the Prophet himself could not hold his tears at their grief. Then he said, "Call my beloved brother 'Ali to me." 'Ali came in and sat near the head of the Prophet. When the Prophet lifted his head, 'Ali moved to the side and, holding the Prophet's head, he rested it, on his own lap. The Prophet then said:

"O 'Ali! I have taken a certain amount from so and so

Jew for the expenditure on Usamah's army. See that you repay it. And, O 'Ali! You will be the first person to reach me at the heavenly reservoir of al-Kawthar. You will also be given a lot of trouble after my death. You should bear it patiently and when you see ".that the people prefer the lust of this world, you should prefer the hereafter

:The following is quoted in Khasa' is of Nasa' i from Ummu Salamah

By Allah, the closest person [to the Prophet] at the time of the Prophet's death was" 'Ali. Early on the morning of the day when he was going to die, the Prophet called 'Ali who had been sent out on some errand. He asked for 'Ali three times before his return. However, 'Ali came before sunrise. So, thinking that the Prophet needed some privacy with 'Ali, we came out. I was the last to be out; therefore, I sat closer to the door than the other women. I saw that 'Ali lowered his head towards the Prophet and the Prophet kept whispering into his ears (for sometime). Therefore, 'Ali is the only ".person who was near the Prophet till the last

:Al-Hakim, moreover, remarks in his Mustadrak that

".the Prophet kept confiding in 'Ali till the time of his death. Then he breathed his last"

Ibn al-Wardi points out that the persons who were responsible for giving the Prophet :his funeral bath were

Ali, Abbas, Fadhl Qutham, Usamah and Shaqran. Abbas, Fadhl and Qutham turned"

the body. Usamah

".and Shaqran poured water, and Ali washed the body

:Tarikh al-Khamis adds the following

Abbas, Fadhl and Qutham turned the body from one side to the other as Usamah and" ".Shaqran poured water over it. All of them were blind-folded

:Ibn Sa'd narrates the following in his Tabaqat

Ali narrated that the Prophet had so enjoined that if anyone except himself (Ali) had" ".given him the funeral bath, he would have gone blind

Abdul-Barr, in his book Al-Isti'ab, quotes 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas as saying: "Ali had four' :such exceptional honors to his credit as none of us had

- Of all the Arabs and non-Arabs, he was the first to have the distinction of saying .prayers with the Prophet
- In all the battles in which he participated, he alone held the Prophet's banner in his .hand
- When people fled from the battle-fields leaving the Prophet alone, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib .stood firmly by the Prophet's side
- Ali is the only person who gave the Prophet his funeral bath and lowered him in his ".grave

Both Abul-Fida' and Ibn al-Wardi indicate that the Prophet died on Monday and was buried the next day, i.e. Tuesday. And in one tradition, it is said that he was buried in the night between Tuesday and Wednesday. This appears to be more factual. But .according to some others, he was not buried for three days after his death

In Tarikh-al-Khamis, however, it is mentioned that Muhammad ikn Ishaq stated the :following

The Prophet died on Monday and was buried on"

".the night of Wednesday

:Estimating his age, Abul-Fida' writes

Although there is a difference of opinion about the Prophet's age, yet calculated from" ".famous traditions, he appears to have lived for ۶۳ years

The Holy Prophet departed from this world on the ۲۸th of Safar, ۱۱ A.H. Thus ended .the life of the Final Prophet sent

as a witness and a bringer ofglad tidings, a warner and a summoner unto Allah by His (permission, and a lamp that gives light (Qur'an, ۳۳:۴۵-۴۶

(the one who was sent as a mercy and blessing to mankind (Qur'an, ۲۱:۱۰

.He left the temporal world, but the message he brought to mankind is eternal

Now has come unto you light from Allah and a clear book whereby Allah guides him who seeks His pleasure unto the paths ofpeace. He brings them out of the darkness (into the light by His decree and guides them unto a straight path. (Qur'an, ۵:۱۶

A Book which We have revealed to you (O Muhammad!) so that you may thereby bring

forth mankind from darkness unto the light, by the permission of their Lord, unto the (path of Him, the Exalted in power, the One worthy of all praise. (Qur'an, ۱۴:۲

O people! There has come to you an admonition from your Lord which is a healing for (what is in the breasts, and a guidance and mercy for the believers. (Qur'an, ۱۰:۵۷

Accept what the Messenger gives you and stay away from whatever he forbids you. ,(Qur'an

Marriages of the Holy Prophet

When the Holy Prophet passed away, he left nine wives behind. This has become a main target of the Christian and Jewish writers. They say that plurality of marriage (polygamy) in itself points to avidity and to yielding to lust and desire, and the Prophet was not content with four wives which had been allowed to his Ummah but exceeded .even that limit and married nine women

It is necessary to point out that this is not such a simple matter to be dismissed in a sentence that he was inordinately fond of women, so much so that he married nine wives. The fact is that he had married each one of his wives for some particular .reason due to particular circumstances

His first marriage was with Khadijah. He lived with her alone for twenty-five years. It was the prime time of his youth and constitutes two-thirds of his married life. We .have written about her on the preceding pages

Then he married Sawdah bint Zam'ah whose husband had expired during the second migration to Abyssinia. Sawdah was a believing lady who had migrated on account of her faith. Her father and brother were among the most bitter enemies of Islam. If she were left to return to them, they would have tortured and tormented her, as they were doing with other believing men and women, oppressing and killing them, forcing .them to renounce their faith

At the same time, he married 'Ayishah bint Abu Bakr, who was then a six-year

.old child. She came to the Prophet's house some time after the migration to Medina

Then he emigrated to Medina and began spreading the word of Allah. Thereafter, he married eight women, all of them widows or divorcees, all old or middle-aged. This continued for about eight years. It was only then that he was prohibited by the Almighty from marrying any woman besides those whom he had already married. Obviously, these happenings cannot be explained by his love for women because both .his early life and the later period contradict such an assumption

Just look at a man with a passion for women who is infatuated with a carnal desire, enamored by female companionship, with a sensual lust for them. You will find him attracted to their adornment, spending his time in pursuit of beauty, infatuated with .coquetry and flirtation and craving for youth, tender age, and fresh complexion

But these peculiarities are conspicuously absent in the Prophet's life. He married widows after having married a virgin, old-aged ladies after having married young girls. Then he offered his wives a choice to give them a good provision and allow them to depart gracefully, i.e. divorce them if they desired this world and its adornment. Alternatively, they should renounce the world and abstain from adornments and embellishments if they desired Allah and His Prophet and the latter abode. Look at this :verse of the Qur'an

O Prophet! Say to your wives: If you desire this world's life and its ornature then come, I

will give you a provision and allow you to depart a graceful departure. And if you desire Allah and His Messenger and the latter abode, then surely Allah has prepared (for the doers of good from among you a ,mighty reward. (Qur'an, ۳۳:۲۸-۲۹

Is this the attitude of a man infatuated with lust and desire?! The fact is that we will :have to look for reasons other than lust and avidity for his plurality of wives

He had married many of them in order to give them protection and safeguard their • .dignity

It was hoped that the Muslims would follow his example and provide protection to • .aged women, widows and their orphaned children

Sawdah bint Zam'ah's marriage comes into this category. Zainab bint Khuzaymah's husband, 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh (a cousin of the Prophet), was martyred during the battle of Uhud (as stated above). This was the second time she became a widow. She was one of the most generous ladies even in the era of ignorance, so much so that she was called "Mother of the poor". Now she was facing hard times. The Prophet, by marrying her, preserved her prestige and dignity. She passed away in the life-time of .the Prophet. Year of marriage: ۳ A.H

Ummu Salamah, whose actual name was Hind, was married to 'Abdullah Abu Salamah (another cousin of the Prophet who was also his foster brother). Abu Salamah and his wife were among the first to migrate to Abyssinia. She had renounced worldly pleasures and

was highly distinguished for her piety and wisdom. When her husband died, she was very advanced in age and had many orphaned children. That is why the Prophet .married her. Year of marriage ۴ A.H

Hafsah bint 'Umar ibn al-Khattab was married to him after her husband Khunays ibn Hudhayfah was martyred during the battle of Badr, leaving her a widow. Year of .marriage ۴ A.H

- To set free the slaves: His marriage with Juwayriyyah, i.e. Barrah daughter of al-Harith (chief of Banu al-Mustaliq) was performed in ۵ A.H. after the battle of Banu al-Mustaliq. The Muslims had arrested two hundred of their families. Juwayriyyah was a widow, and the Prophet married her after emancipating her. The Muslims said: These are now the relatives of the Messenger of Allah by marriage; they should not be held captive. So they freed all of them. Impressed by this nobility, the whole tribe of Banu al-Mustaliq entered into the fold of Islam. It was a very large tribe, and this generosity of the Muslims as well as the conversion of that tribe had a great impact throughout .Arabia

- To forge friendly relations: Some marriages were entered into in the hope of establishing friendly relationships with some tribes in order to blunt their enmity .towards Islam

Ummu Habibah, i.e. Ramlah daughter of Abu Sufyan, was married to 'Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh and had emigrated with them to Abyssinia in the second migration. While there, 'Ubaydullah was converted to Christianity, but she remained steadfastly on

Islam and separated from him. Her father, Abu Sufyan, was in those days raising one army after another in order to annihilate the Muslims. The Prophet married her and afforded protection to her although the hope of any change in Abu Sufyan's attitude .did not materialize

Safiyyah was the daughter of Huyaiy ibn Akhtab, (Jewish) chief of Banu an-Nadhir Her husband was killed in the battle of Khaybar, and her father sided with Banu Qurayzah. She was among the captives of Khaybar. The Prophet chose her for himself and married her after emancipating her in ۷ A.H. This marriage protected her from .humiliation and established a link with the Jews

 To establish and implement important laws: The case of Zainab bint Jahsh is its only example. She was a cousin of the Prophet (daughter of his paternal aunt, and sister of 'Abdullah ibn Jahsh, the first husband of Zainab bint Khuzaymah). She was a widow. Islam had annulled class differences and declared that a family's tribe, wealth, or .social status are not the criteria of distinction. Every Muslim is equal

While announcing it, the Prophet, in the same sitting, gave his three relative ladies in marriage to persons of "low" birth or status. It was done in order to practically demonstrate the Islamic equality, which up to that moment, was only a theoretical p nciple. Among them, Zainab bint Jahsh was given in marriage to Zayd ibn Harithah, an .Arab slave whom the Prophet had freed and adopted as son

People called him Zayd ibn Muhammad. This marriage soon turned sour. Zainab could not overlook that she was a granddaughter of 'AbdulMuttalib, and that Zayd was an ex-slave. No matter how much the Prophet advised them, she did not change her .behavior, so finally Zayd divorced her

In the midst of the continuing social reforms, the Qur'an had declared that adoption was not recognized in Islam, that the sons should be affiliated to their actual fathers. :Allah says

Allah has not made for any man two hearts in his breast, nor has He made your wives whom you declare (to be your mothers) as your (real) mothers, nor has He made those whom you call (as your sons) your (real) sons. These are (mere) words of your mouths, and Allah speaks the truth and He guides unto the (right) way. Call them after their fathers; this is more just with Allah, but if you know not their fathers, then they (are your brethren in faith and your friends. (Qur'an, ۳۳:۴-۵

After this admonition, people started calling him "Zayd ibn Harithah". But there was a need to put this new system in effect in such a way as to leave no room for doubt or ambiguity. Allah, therefore, ordered the Prophet to marry Zainab bint Jahsh, the :divorcee of Zayd ibn Harithah. The Qur'an explains

But when Zayd had concluded his concern with her (i.e. divorced her) We joined her .... in wedlock as your wife so that there should be no difficulty for

the believers concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they have concluded (their concerns with them, and the command ofAllah shall be carried out. (Qur'an, ٣٣:٣٧

In this manner, both marriages of Zainab hint Jahsh served to enforce two very important social ethics. Some non-Muslim writers have claimed that the Prophet had fallen in love with Zainab's beauty and that this was why Zayd divorced her. Such .writers are blind to the fact that Zainab at that time was in her fifties

Why did not Muhamaad fall in love with her when she was still a maiden and he himself was young? Consider this question especially in view of the fact that Zainab was a close relative of the Prophet, and that there was no system of hijab at that .time, and, in any case, relatives usually know about each other's beauty or ugliness

One of his wives was Maymunah whose name was Barrah bint al-Harith al-Hilaliyyah. When her second husband died in the ٧th year of Hijrah, she came to the Prophet and "gifted" herself to him if he would accept her. She only desired the honor of being called the wife of the Prophet. The Prophet waited for the divine guidance in her regard. Permission was granted to him from his Lord as we read in verse ٣٣:٥٠ of the :Holy Qur'an which says

O Prophet! Certainly we have made lawful unto you ... a believing woman if she gifts herself unto the Prophet; if the Prophet desires

to marry her, (it is) especially for thee (O Prophet!) rcjher than for the rest of the (believers. (Qur'an, ٣٣:٥٠

Thus do we see that each of these marriages had some solid reasons behind it; .passion and lust were not among them

Glossary

Adhan the call for prayers; muadhdhin is one who performs adhan

Dirham an Islamic silver currency weighing approximately ٣.١٢ grams

Hafiz one who knows the entire text of the Holy Qur'an by heart; plurall "huffaz." In hadith, one is called haftz if he memorizes one hundred thousand traditions with their chains of narrators

Hajj Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca during the month of Dhul-Hijjah Hijabah the trusteeship of the Ka'bah

Ihram pilgrimage garb, two white unwoven cotton robes worn by pilgrims

Kafir infidel, apostate, atheist, one who does not believe in the existence of the .Creator, one who deliberately covers the truth

Khandaq moat, ditch

Khums one-fifth of one's savings (usually paid by Shi'a Muslims only) set aside from annual income

Muhaddith one who narrates hadith, traditions of the Holy Prophet

Najis unclean, impure

Nadhr sing. of "nudhur," one's pledge to do something good, an act of charity, to show appreciation for the Almighty's fulfillment of his/her earnest worldly wish

Rifadah the act of feeding the pilgrims during the pilgrimage season

Sahih literally: authentic, correct, accurate; it is generally used to refer to a collection, group of collections, or book of verified and authenticated ahadith (plural of hadith, tradition; see muhaddith above) of the Holy Prophet

Sajdah prostration

Saraya plural of sariya, a military expedition in which the Prophet himself did not

participate

Shari'ah Islamic legislative system

Siqayah the act- of providing water to the thirsty (especially the pilgrims) free of charge

Tafsir (sing.) exegesis or explanation of Qur'anic verses and chapters; plural: tafasir

Tarikh chronicle, a book of history

Tawaf circling around Ka'bah

Umrah the lesser pilgrimage done outside the month of Hajj

Waqf a piece of property dedicated for the promotion of any particular good cause, a charitable trust, endowment

.And surely Allah knows best

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

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replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

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Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

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:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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